THE VATICAN against EUROPE

Edmond Paris

This book, by a writer born in the Roman Catholic religion, claims to show the responsibility of the Roman Church in the unparalleled catastrophe of the two World Wars. An unwillingness to accept any official version of historical facts without close scrutiny has led the author to notice certain gaps and omissions which by their frequency have struck him as being systematic. He has found this particularly true of the Holy See, and in his investigations into the part it has played in contemporary affairs he has taken inlinite pains to assemble the works of the most highly qualified writers as well as official documents and papers from archives, and his conclusions have been reached after much patient research and cross-checking.

Born in Paris of a Roman Catholic family of scholars, Edmond Paris has always been especially interested in philosophical, religious and social matters, and after leaving the Sorbonne, where he was an assiduous student, he completed his studies in various parts of the world. Concerned always to remain in close contact with reality, he travelled widely and was thus able to compare what he had learned with what he saw, and this no less than his vast culture is clearly apparent in his written works, which include Le Vatican Contre La France, as well as in his lectures, reflecting as they do a man remarkably free from bias, and one governed by a veritable passion for the truth.

If it is true that "all roads lead to Rome" with regard to international politics, then this is indeed a work that should be read by all who care where they are going.

Part III

GERMAN AGGRESSIONS, THE ELECTION OF PIUS XII AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Part IV

MURDERERS' HOUR

APPENDIX

FOREWORD

IN my last book[1], I made it clear that I should allow myself no incursion into the religious field. "The Vatican," 1 said, "owing to its twofold nature—at one and the same time temporal and spiritual—is particularly subject to ambiguity. Consequently, I would stress that I have considered only the political side."

In the present work the same principle has been followed. I have confined myself to highlighting the historical continuity of the retrograde and evil politics of the Vatican, as well as the latter's overwhelming responsibility in the disasters that have succeeded one another in Europe during the last fifty years.

The following pages lay bare the deceit and crimes in which the Holy See, its representatives throughout the world and its Nazi and Fascist allies have participated, and which their unparalleled hypocrisy has not been able to conceal.

The book opens with a bill of indictment against the Vatican. The charges are taken up separately in the ensuing chapters, where they are matched with ample and incontestable proof of a continued collusion with the torturers of mankind who started the last world catastrophe.

But this collusion is well within the tradition of the Holy See. It dates back for many centuries. In all circumstances, ever since the days of Charlemagne, the Papacy has not ceased to lean upon the Germans, in order to impose its authority and to extend it throughout Europe. The Reformation had undoubtedly disturbed the agreement that for centuries had held good between the Holy See and Mittel-Europa, and had withdrawn a part of the German peoples from obedience to the Vatican. Austria-Hungary alone remained entirely submissive. But, step by step and with infinite patience, the Roman Curia gradually and without pause regained the influence lost, at the same time placing at the service of Pan-Germanic appetites the entire spiritual ascendancy enjoyed by the

[1] Le Vatican contre la France (Fischbacher, Paris, 1957).

Holy See among the Catholics in both the Reich and the rest of Europe. Thus Germany The Great, like the Habsburg Empire, was to serve as a "secular arm" in order to annihilate the influence of Orthodox Russia in the Balkans and to restore the Holy See's authority in secular France. The game was lost in 1918, but was resumed in 1939, with the Vatican playing the very same card which it is still playing today.

Guy Emery Shipler[2] clearly summarized the importance of this political activity of the Vatican when he wrote "No political event or circumstance can be evaluated without the knowledge of the Vatican's part in it. And no significant world political situation exists in which the Vatican does not play an important, explicit or implicit part."

Here, as in the earlier book, I have endeavoured to present the reader with the actual texts upon which my belief rests, in order that he might judge of their meaning and implication. Likewise, in selecting these quotations, I have had recourse to books and newspapers which are not considered hostile to the Holy See, and whose testimony is therefore the more convincing.

[2]Quoted by Avro Manhattan in The Vatican and World Politics (Horizon Press, New York).

THE POLITICS OF THE HOLY SEE : BILL OF INDICTMENT

THE POLITICS OF THE HOLY SEE: BILL OF INDICTMENT

THE continuity of the Vatican's anti-liberal policy. — The fatality of its agreement with the Germanic world. — An Italian Member of Parliament exclaims: "The Pope's hands are dripping with blood!" — An inquiry into the facts reveals the primordial role of the Vatican in the preparation of the two world wars. — The result: the irremediable decline of Europe. — Silence before the crimes, a consequence of papal absolutism. — The iron sceptre of the new "oppressor of the peoples". — Curious fate of a religion that was to "liberate souls". — After the war. The Holy See resumes control of the Germanic "secular arm". "Nothing has changed. The pious Adenauer has replaced Hitler . . .". — 1957: Vast gathering of the former SS and Waffen SS of Europe. — By means of the "European" plans, the Vatican intends to subjugate France to Germany. The means which enabled it to weaken her: the war of Indo-China, the Suez "coup", the rebellion of North Africa. — The same dissolving action in Darkest Africa and Madagascar.

Peter since the outbreak of the first world war, and their attitude has been invariably the same towards the two rival camps of Europe: Western democracies and Central European Empires. But, as will be seen, it is no mere partiality for which the Holy See is blamed, but first and foremost its decisive role in the preparation of both conflicts, its never-failing support of the aggressor.

The extollers of Pope Pius XII may well cover their faces when an Italian Member of Parliament exclaims: "The Pope's hands are dripping with blood!"[2] Nevertheless, simply to recall the facts will be to build up a terrible indictment of the Vatican.

In Germany, before 1914, the Catholic Zentrum wholeheartedly supported the belligerent preparations of the Imperial Government. Its chiefs were already proclaiming Germany's "great political and moral mission" in the world. "In 1914, Cardinal Faulhaber[3] declared that in effect God was German.'"

Pope Pius X, in his hatred of the Orthodox Christians, was continually inciting Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria-Hungary to "chastise the Serbians". After Sarajevo, on 26 July 1914, Baron Ritter, Bavarian representative at the Holy See, wrote to his Government : "The Pope approves of Austria's harsh treatment of Serbia. He has no great opinion of the armies of Russia and France in the event of a war against Germany. The Cardinal Secretary of State does not see when Austria could make war if she does not decide to do so now. ..."

There, in true colours, is the Vicar of Christ, the gentle apostle of peace, the Holy Pontiff whom pious authors represent as having "died of sorrow at seeing the outbreak of war".

Pope Pius X was succeeded by Benedict XV, "the 'boche' Pope". His attempts to prevent first Italy and then the United States from entering the war alongside the Allies, his intrigues intended to divide the Allies, his note for a "stalemate" peace in 1917 (with the help of Mgr. Pacelli, Papal Nuncio in Munich) shocked even the French Catholics, whose patriotism was still alive. Of course, the "boche" Pope took good care not to condemn the violation of rights, the torpedoing of neutral ships, or any of the excesses committed by the German army.

[2]Speech by Laura Diaz, Member of Parliament for Leghorn, delivered on 15 April 1948 at Ortona
[3]Adrien Dansette Destin du catholicisme francais (Flamrnarion, Paris, 1957. p. 192).

In 1922, Pope Pius XI donned the tiara. The Papacy had lost the first war; it was about to prepare for the second.

What was happening in Europe during the years between the two massacres?

In Italy, secret negotiations took place between papal agents and Mussolini, "the man of Providence". The priest don Sturzo, Chief of the Catholic Group, had full rights voted to the Duce on 16 November 1922. Then came the Lateran Treaty, to seal the union of Fascism and the Papacy, the conquest of Ethiopia—blessed by the clergy—and. on Good Friday 1939, the aggression against Albania.

In Germany the Papal Nuncio in Berlin, Mgr. Pacelli, and Franz von Papen, Privy Chamberlain to the Pope, advocated a "union with Rome" and concentrated on the overthrow of the Weimar Republic. The German Catholics were hostile to Nazism, but were informed that the Pope himself was "favourably disposed towards Hitler". Consequently, the Catholic Zentrum, axis of all the parliamentary majorities, voted full rights to Hitler on 30 January 1933. This operation was promptly followed, as in Italy, by the concluding of a concordat which was most advantageous to the Roman Church. The German Episcopate swore allegiance to the Fuhrer, and Catholic youth organizations combined with those of the Nazis. In 1935, the Saar voted its re-attachment to the Reich after a favourable electoral campaign by the Bishops of Trier and Speyer. Henceforth, the principal champion of the Papacy—the Germanic "secular arm"—visibly gathered strength.

In Spain, the Virgin appeared here and there, and effigies of Christ shed tears. These were unmistakable signs—the Republic and its impious regime would not last long. On 31 March 1934 the Pact of Rome was signed, and pledged the support of Mussolini and Hitler for the rebellion. The "holy war" broke out. In 1937, in the midst of war, the Vatican gave de jure recognition to the Government of Franco, its sword-bearer, who was later to be decorated with the Supreme Order of Christ. "Blessed be the guns if the Gospel flowers in their wake!" Soon the Catholic Action was to spread its reign of tyranny across the ruined country. Pax Christi!

In Belgium, once more it was the Catholic Action which, under the title of Christus-Rex, implanted a local Nazism and prepared

the way for Hitler, the modern Messiah, who was soon to knock, a trifle roughly, at the door. Mgr. Picard, Canon Cardijn (later to be elevated to the rank of Monseigneur by Pope Pius XII) and their protege, the ineffable Leon Degrelle, applied themselves to this pious task.

In France, the spokesmen of Rome gave their blessing to the "strong" policies; the Deats, the Doriots, and the Bucards all aped the dictators. The fifth column was organized, and already Gustave Herve was crying: "Petain is the man for us!"[4]

In Austria (which was destined to be the Fuhrer's first prey), the "Christian" chancellors succeeded one another, beginning with the Jesuit, Mgr. Seipel. Their reactionary politics were to end, in 1938, in the country's being absorbed by Hitler's Reich. The entire Austrian Episcopate, led by Cardinal Innitzer, declared its whole-hearted support of the Anschluss. Thus eight million Austrians were to help to swell the ranks of German Catholics.

In Czechoslovakia also, the Roman Church was working for the Fuhrer by upholding the separatist Slovaks, at whose head was Mgr. Hlinka, with his "Guard" modelled on the Nazi S.A. Hitler annexed "Sudeten Germany", dismembered the country, and created the satellite state of Slovakia, where a Catholic prelate, Mgr. Tiso, played the role of Gauleiter. He promised to organize this state "along Christian lines", a policy which found its particular expression in the deportation of Slovak Jews to Auschwitz.

Catholic Poland in its turn succumbed beneath the blows of the Fuhrer, without any protest from Pope Pius XII. Indeed, he tried to persuade France and England to accept a compromise peace that would recognize the amputation of Poland to the benefit of Germany. Here again, several more million Catholics would join the Reich, and so proportionately strengthen the position of Rome.

War broke out. In an invaded France, Petain, the "saviour" who had long been held in reserve, was raised to power. Then came the "collaboration" with Hitler which was unrelentingly urged upon the faithful by the French Episcopate, led by Mgr. Suhard, Archbishop of Paris. These same bishops advocated enrolment in the LVF (Legion des Volontaires Francais). On 30 July 1941, Cardinal

[4] Francois Ternand L'ascension politique du marechal Petain (Editions du Livre francais, Paris 1946. p. 40).

Baudrillart even declared, "Hitler's war is a noble undertaking".

In a dismembered Yugoslavia, the temporary victors were carving out the pseudo-independent state of Croatia. As in Slovakia, the Catholic clergy were well represented in Parliament. Under the watchful eyes of Mgr. Stepinac and the Pontifical Legate, Marcone, the Jews were being either deported or massacred, and the Orthodox Serbs and their clergy exterminated with an unparalleled refinement of cruelty, when they were not being "converted" by terror. Catholic priests and monks preached murder and even participated in it, and Ante Pavelitch, Chief of the Ustashis, was received in great pomp by Pope Pius XII.

In Russia, Hitler's troops were advancing, and among the SS that followed them were the Jesuit converters.

In Poland, the "Wartheland" which was destined to become the territory for German colonization, was scientifically "cleared". All Poles who opposed them and especially Jewish Poles, were exterminated; "genocide", by shooting or by gassing, had begun. Meanwhile, the camps of Auschwitz, Dachau, Belsen and others devoured their inmates, who had first been reduced to skeletons. Twenty-five million human beings {the official figure recorded by the UN) perished in these hells of slow death, without the Vicar of Christ ever having raised his voice. Not only that, but he sent no chaplains to these camps.

Then came the Peace!

Questioned later, Pope Pius XII was to say that he knew nothing of the German atrocities; as he doubtless knew nothing of those of Croatia and Slovakia; as—in 1933—when, as Mgr. Pacelli, he knew nothing of the pogroms, the ever-increasing assassinations in Germany, or the 40,000 persons already detained in forty-five camps by the Fuhrer, who had promised him that he would "muzzle the anti-clericals".

But during the trials at Nuremberg, when these atrocities had been laid bare before the eyes of the whole world, by millions of testimonies, irrefutable documents, and films haunting in their horror, what did he do but fly to the aid of the guilty? He saved Franz von Papen, "the man who knew too much", and with him some of the worst criminals—or, rather, some of the best workers for the "good cause"—those who must be saved for the future.

Likewise, he sheltered the fleeing murderers in his convents, and later sent them with false passports to safe asylums. Thus, thanks to him, the leader of the bloodthirsty Ustashis, Ante Pavelitch, "the man with twenty kilograms of human eyes", the monster whom Pope Pius XII covered with good wishes and blessings during four years of massacre, was able to go to Argentina and peacefully enjoy the wealth that had been plundered from his victims!

There are laws for the punishment of those who conceal wrong-doers and help them to escape the investigations of the police, and, above all, there are laws to prevent the association of such wrong-doers and the preparation of crimes. But the Pope is above the Law.[5]

This is implicity recognized by Camille Cianfarra[6], who writes: "The prestige of the Sovereign Pontiff is so great that, should he ever commit any serious offences in the pursuit of a policy fore-doomed to failure, he could nevertheless always count upon the undying devotion and loyalty of the clergy and of his flock."

* * *

In this book we shall expose the "serious offences" committed by the Papacy over a period of thirty years or so. They are so serious, indeed, that they have ended in the most appalling massacres and in the irreparable decline of Europe. So serious and so obvious were they that during the Italian electoral campaign of April 1948, Emilio Bonetti declared, "The Pope is a war criminal!"

How is it conceivable after this that the "undying devotion" of the clergy and of faithful Catholics should have remained unaffected? So far as the clergy were concerned, it is not inconceivable if one recalls that even in the seventeenth century, Nickel, the Jesuit General, wrote in his Instructions: "Let us forget our native land... . The Company cannot continue if the national spirit is not entirely uprooted." But did the faithful also treat the interests of their country and the lives of their children so lightly, as soon as the Roman Curia thought fit to sacrifice them to its geopolitical plans? Was

[5]The French have every opportunity to see this in Algeria today, where with complete impunity certain representatives of His Holiness are assisting the rebellion, printing tracts and concealing hunted murderers who, once the alarm is over, will go and find other victims. (AUTHOR'S NOTE.)

[6]La guerre el le Vatican (Le Portulan, Paris 1946. p. 85).

their "loyalty" towards the Sovereign Pontiff capable of overriding all natural sentiments, even to the extent of making them completely indifferent to atrocities so monstrous that they ought to have revolted—let us not say their Christian charity (that would be sarcastic)—but their ordinary humanity ?

Must it be said that the flock refused to recognize, in all these calamities, the sempiternal stamp of Rome? Actually, it would be most interesting to know what can be opposed—other than idle words—to this mass of proofs which establishes its guilt, from the warlike incitements addressed to Francis Joseph, which were to start the first world war, to the shameless rescue of the criminals of the second. Can one deny the fact that first Mussolini, and then Hitler, were raised to power, by identical means, by don Sturzo and the Catholic Zentrum ? Can one deny the enthusiastic adherence of the episcopates to the dictatorial regimes, the obstinate silence of the Pope at the time of the Fascist and Nazi aggressions; the attempts to reach "peace" in order to ensure the dictators possession of their plunder, the refusal to condemn the massacre of innocent populations, and the horrors of the death camps ?

Furthermore, how is it possible to mistake the direct assistance which Pope Pius XII rendered in the perpetration of these atrocities, by "lending" certain of his prelates, to become pro-Nazi agents such as Mgr. Hlinka, and Gauleiters such as Mgr. Tiso; by sending his personal Nuncio to Croatia to supervise, with Mgr. Stepinac, the "work" of Ante Pavelitch and his Ustashis? For, wherever one looks, one sees the same "edifying" spectacle.

Yet the faithful were silent in the face of so many crimes. Is this not the most deadly of all the results of papal absolutism? To be sure, we know that His Holiness makes infallible ex cathedra declarations upon faith and morals by virtue of the direct communication which he maintains with the Paraclete—at least since 1870.[7] But the decrees that he fulminates under this lofty inspiration do not in principle cover political questions and all the more when such matters concern the very life of the country. A Catholic is not obliged in conscience—as far as we know, at least—to say a quiet "Amen" to machinations of the Vatican which are directed against

[7]The dogma of the Pope's infallibility was proclaimed in 1870 by the Council of the Vatican. (AUTHOR'S NOTE.)

French gold and French prestige, and that the wasting of these assets was in no way displeasing to the tiara-wearing Machiavelli reigning in Rome.

In Dark Africa, in Madagascar, the same kind of activity was openly undertaken against France through the trickery of the clergy and the missionaries. None the less, people who are still unable to govern themselves are incited to rebellion without a thought being given to the anarchical disorder that will follow in the wake of a premature "independence". Would the Church be counting upon replacing French protection by a "theocracy" of its own?[1]

We are doubtful whether the latter could be "implanted and adapt itself", to use the terms dear to the geopoliticians of the Sacristy. It seems to us that, deprived of Western support, among these peoples who are naturally little inclined to the apostolic "doctrine" the Roman Church will experience some bitter disappointments. These peoples—young as they are—might in turn wish to know the meaning of Pax Christi, as did a certain other people (in this instance, of very ancient culture), as we are told by La Croix: "The Indians do not see the Papacy as a spiritual guide. In their mind, any (ink with the Papacy must mean that India will he drawn into foreign wars".[12]

It must be admitted that the Indians have penetrating minds. Will there come a time when the western peoples, returning to wisdom, will also examine the Vatican question, calmly, in the light of history? If so, they will then see, from a mere examination of the facts, the following: that the Roman Church, rapacious, warlike, stirring up conflicts, turning to her own benefit—with unfailing perfidy—the interests and passions of the world, far from fulfilling her mission of guardianship, has always been the worst sower of discord among the nations she claims to pacify and unite.

[11]Francois Mejan Le Vatican est-il contrel a France d'outre-mer? (Fischbacber, Paris 1958).
[12]La Croix, 8 January 1955

THE EVIDENCE

Part I
THE FIRST WORLD WAR

CHAPTER I

THE EUROPEAN SITUATION ON THE EVE OF 1914

THE Triple Alliance. — Pope Pius X, Pope of the Austro-Germans. — Papal absolutism: the fatality of clericalism. — The rapprochement between the Vatican and Berlin. — The Catholic Zentrum supports Prussian militarism. — The Vatican's marked hostility towards France. — President Loubet's journey to Rome. — The Pope refuses to receive him. — The Vatican does not favour a Franco-Italian rapprochement that would weaken the Triple Alliance. — The Law of Separation of Church from State is promulgated in France. — The break with the Vatican. — France is treated as Enemy No. 1 by the Papacy. — Mgr. Cristiani, or the art of falsifying history.

"The claims of the Roman Catholic Church imply a rebellion against modern civilization and an intention to destroy it, at the risk of destroying society itself To he able to submit themselves to these claims, men need the souls of slaves!"

J. W. DRAPER.
Professor at the University of New York

"Germany is the element upon which the Holy Father can and must base great hopes."

MGR. FRUHWIRTH.

"One has to fight with fists. In a duel, blows are neither counted nor measured. . . . War is not fought with charity."

POPE PIUS X.

EVER since 1882, the Triple Alliance had united Germany, Austria and Italy. Just what this union signified for each, Count Carlo Sforza, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Italy, reveals to us in his book "LTtalie telle que je l'ai vue"[1]:

" 'A treaty', wrote Bismarck to Kalnoky on 10 February 1887, 'will always have its gaps, even if it is most meticulously drafted; when necessary, there will always be a way of evading the clearest stipulations. At present, it is important for us that, should Austria-Hungary enter into war with Russia, she be assured of non-aggression by Italy. That can be obtained only through Italian neutrality'. These two sentences reveal the idea of an offensive war against Russia, something which Italy would never have accepted. . . ."

Sforza goes on to describe the secret satisfaction with which news of the assassination of Archduke Francois-Ferdinand at Sarajevo was received not only by the Emperor, thus relieved of his dynastic problems arising from the Archduke's morganatic marriage, but also by the camarilla of the Court of Vienna and the magnates of Hungary, who saw in this assassination the long-awaited pretext for crushing Serbia.

The proof, he asserts, is given us by the wording of the Viennese memorandum aimed at ensuring the support of Germany's armed

[1]Grasset, Paris 1946, pp. 30 et seq.

forces in the event of an Austro-Serbian war. Drafted before the assassination, and submitted to William II shortly after the event, it bore a post-script which pointed to this murder as proof of the irreconcilable antagonism existing between the Monarchy and Serbia.

Vienna took great care not to send the memorandum to her other ally, democratic Italy. Indeed, it was recalled therein that shortly before the Treaty of Bucarest, which, in 1913, sanctioned the Serbian annexations in Macedonia and the transfer of Salonica to Greece, the Ambassador of Austria-Hungary in Rome, Merey, announced to Marquis San Giuliano, without any psychological preparation whatsoever, the Monarchy's decision to attack Serbia. Prime Minister Giolitti replied that, in such an eventuality, the casus foederis would not be justified, and insisted that Germany should dissuade Austria from throwing herself into this perilous venture.

"Without Giolitti's firm and dignified reply the European war would have broken out a year earlier," adds Sforza.

It will later be seen how Emperor Francis Joseph was pushed into this aggression against Serbia by Pope Pius X. But it should first of all be seen under what conditions the latter received the tiara.

The Austro-Germans want a pro-German Pope

"It was commonly thought," writes Rene Bazin[2] of the Academie franchise, "that Cardinal Rampolla would be elected. ... He was considered as being favourable to France. . . . When, on the morning of 2 August 1903, the cardinals were gathered in the Sistine Chapel, Cardinal Puzyna. having accepted from the old Emperor of Austria, Francis Joseph, the task of preventing the election of Cardinal Rampolla, read out a passage in Latin, asserting that his sovereign was opposed to this designation. His disregard for reality was such that he declared himself honoured by his mission. It might have been hoped that these old abuses of secular power would remain in the history we read, and not pass into that which we live. Feelings ran high. Cardinal Rampolla immediately replied: 'I regret that, in a pontifical election, a serious blow has been struck by a lay power at

[2]Pie X (Flammarion, Paris 1928. pp. 57 el seq.)

the liberty of the Church and the dignity of the College of Cardinals, and I therefore protest most energetically....'

"The evening's poll yielded 35 votes for Guiseppe Sarto (Pius X) as against 16 for the Cardinal Rampolla. The following morning, 4 August 1903, he was elected by fifty votes. . . . The Pope's coronation took place in St. Peter's, on the morning of 9 August. . . . Cardinal Macchi placed the tiara on the Pontiff's head, saying:

'Receive the tiara of the three crowns, and know that thou art the father of princes and of kings, the world's judge. . . .' "

In the circumstances, this stock phrase was cruelly ironical, when—apparently at least—the entire Conclave had just bowed to the will of His Apostolic Majesty, the Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary.

The word "apparently" is stressed, for if the fact of the Austrian intervention is confirmed by the eminent historian Adrien Dansette,[3] Charles Ledre,[4] the Catholic writer, does not think that the intervention was really necessary ... to convince the converted. Indeed, according to him, "it is useless to introduce, by way of explanation, the veto imposed by Austria—in basic agreement with Germany—at the election of Cardinal Rampolla. . . . Among the cardinals resolved to prevent Rampolla from acceding to the pontifical throne, were included many politicians—partisans of the Triple Alliance."

Pope Pius X clearly proved this, when upon his accession, he chose as Secretary of State, Cardinal Merry del Val, Spanish prelate and avowed Germanophile, contrary to the custom which requires that the new pope keep in this post the incumbent who occupied it under his predecessor. But, this happened to be Mgr. Rampolla.

Father Brugerette[5] says of the new Pontiff:

"He took the name of Pope Pius X and the choice of this name, which brought back memories of Pius IX, was the presage of the government which was to render the new pontificate illustrious . . . Following the example of Pius IX, Pius X will in turn prove to be a "non possumus" pope, regarding as primordial . . . the principles of authority upon which he had based his government."

[3]Histoire religieuse de la France contemporaine (Flammanon, Paris 1951, p. 317).
[4]Un siecle sous la tiare (Bibliotheque catholique Amiot-Dumont, Paris 1955, p. 36).
[5]Le pretre francais et la societe contemporaine. Nihil obstat et Imprimatur, Paris 1935 (P. Lethielleux Paris 1935, Vol. II. p. 521).

Indeed, very soon this authoritarian character began to show itself, and not only in religious matters.

Papal absolutism

" 'We shall not hide from you, declared Pius X, on 9 November 1903, 'that We are certain to shock some people when We say that We shall of necessity interest Ourselves in politics. . . .' After that, what limits could be fixed to the power of the Papacy ? Where is a clerical policy thus justified in its principles, to end ?"[6]

"Pius X has published a new 'Syllabus' of 65 heresies", writes Father Fremont[7] . . . "Pius X has just excommunicated whosoever will not accept his encyclical 'PascendV. Whosoever does not accept it in its entirety, with all its implications, is excommunicated. But in that case the encyclical is absolutely authentic? ... It is therefore of the nature of revealed truth? . . . Pius X wants the bishops to be absolute masters of Catholic activity in their dioceses, in the three spheres of religion, politics and social policy".

Thus the "Syllabus" of Pius IX and the encyclical "Pascendi" of Pius X confirm the papal refusal to recognize the sovereignty of lay society and Human Rights.

Pierre Cazenave,[8] who asks himself whether the Catholic Church can avoid having some political influence, notes that, on account of her international character, every state has to meet her not only inside its frontiers, but also in the larger world of international politics, and he adds: "If it is fighting her within its frontiers, it runs the risk of having rise up against it a neighbouring state which has been seized by the Church or has given itself to her. . . ."

This indeed, as will be seen, is what happened to France in 1914 and in 1939.

Frddeiic Hoffet[9], also, has clearly shown the fatality of this intrusion of the Roman clergy in the political field: "Catholicism is clerical and political in its very essence. Catholicism and clericalism are two interchangeable terms... The Roman concept of the Church treats every true believer as a soldier at the service of the ecclesi-

[6] Adrien Danaette, op. cit., p. 319.
[7] Father Fremont, by A. Siegfried (Alcan, Paris 1932, Vol. II, pp. 494, 506, 671).
[8] La Tribune des Nations, 7 December 1956.
[9] L'equivoque catholique (Fischbacher, Paris 1956, pp. 197 and 198).

astical institution, a soldier who, like all others, does not choose his weapons.. . .

"Anticlericalism is not the diabolical invention of Voltatrean minds, the enemies of religion … it simply expresses the will of free men to shake off the yoke of a Church who, proclaiming herself the sole possessor of truth, insists on their submitting themselves to her and on their governments' accepting her authority".

This authority was powerful in Austria-Hungary, and the Holy See was at the same time working for its establishment in Germany, through the famous Zentrum (the Catholic Party) whose activity, inspired by the Vatican, was to prove decisive in the preparation of the first, and later of the second, world war.

The relations of the Holy Eucharist with the House of Habsburg

"Before the first world war," writes Jean Bruhat[10], "the Vatican's feelings were decidedly in favour of Austria-Hungary and Germany. Austria-Hungary was the great Catholic power par excellence. . . . Francis Joseph, who had come to power during the revolution of 1848, found in the Vatican an understanding friend and an efficient ally. The Roman Catholic Church had become a remarkable force for discipline, policy and government in the Habsburg monarchy. 'Certainly,' Maurice Pernot insists,[11] 'there was marvellous agreement between the policy of Vienna and that of Rome'."

"Must we recall to mind the great Eucharistic Congress held in Vienna in 1912? The old Emperor Francis Joseph followed the state carriage in which the Pope's legate was carrying the Holy Sacrament, and a Jesuit Father delivered a sermon on the theme: "The relations of the Holy Eucharist with the House of Habsburg'. Now, Czechs and Slovaks were living under the domination of the Habsburgs who had separated them in an attempt to divide them. To the feudal Magyars had been left the task of oppressing the Slovaks, in which they were assisted by the Vatican and the great ecclesiastical hierarchy. The Pope accepted a situation in which they had not a single bishop of their own nationality; he acquiesced in the banning of the use of the national language in schools and

[10] Le Vatican contre les peuples ("Paralitica", 21 December 1930).
[11]Le Saint Siege l'Eglise catholique et la politique mondiale.

colleges (even during recreation periods); and he allowed the imprisonment of country priests who had remained faithful to the Czech and Slovak national ideal as well as to their faith.

". . . In 1886, the Centre—the German Catholic Party—was against Bismarck's military plans. Leo XIII intervened in German home affairs in Bismarck's favour. His Secretary of State wrote to the Nuncio of Munich: 'In view of the forthcoming revision of religious legislation which, we have reasons to think, will be effected in a conciliatory way, the Holy Father hopes that the Centre will do all in its power to promote the bill for a military septennate'.

". . . In point of fact," as Marc Bonnet[12] remarks, "it was for reasons other than religious that the Vatican turned towards the Habsburg monarchy and the Hohenzollern Empire. The central European empires represented principles of order, hierarchy and preservation that were dear to the Papacy". "Germany," said Mgr. Fruhwirth in 1914, "is a country upon which the Holy Father can and must base great hopes".

This is confirmed by a Catholic author, Joseph Rovan:[13]

"German diplomats made representations—it was already an old habit—at the Vatican in order that the Pope might bring his influence to bear upon the Zentrum (Catholic Party) in favouring the military plans. . . . The German Catholics were sure to talk of the great "political mission of Germany, which was at the same time a universal spiritual mission. 'France was arming for war, Germany in order to maintain peace; France's policy was that of an imperialistic power, Germany's that of Right and of peaceful work'! These words, written after the first world war by Karl Bachem, who for thirty years was one of the Zentrum's principal parliamentary leaders before becoming its historian, show better than lengthy commentaries just how far the German Catholics shared a viewpoint attributable to insidious nationalism. . . ."

"Under the stimulus of Lieber (Chief of the Zentrum), the Zentrum supported the Government's military, naval and colonial policy. . . . The Zentrum was equally responsible for prolonging a reign which, from vain boasting to weakness and from aggressive

[12]Marc Bonnet: La papauti contemporaine. 1946, p. 90.
[13]Le catholicisme politique en Allemagne (Editions du Seuil, Paris 1956, pp. 150 et seq).

speeches to naval armaments, ended in leading Germany to catastrophe...

"The Zentrum allowed the Emperor (William II) to start 'his' war against China in 1900, as if it were a personal matter, without Parliament being called upon to vote the necessary funds, and tolerated similar abuses in 1906 during the violent 'pacification' of South West Africa...

"On the eve of the world catastrophe, German Catholics were participating fully in the material progress of their country, but they also bore a large part of its responsibilities. . . . The 1914 war broke out with the suddenness and brutality of a natural catastrophe . . . the Zentrum entered into the war convinced that its cause was well founded and sure of the purity and moral rectitude of its country's leaders, of the coincidence of its programme and plan with the aims of eternal justice.

" 'If ever a war was just', writes Karl Bachem, jurist, Deputy and Zentrum historiographer, 'it was the Great War, so far as Germany and Austria were concerned'. That was the unanimous conviction of the Zentrum."

"Carried away by the enthusiasm that was roused by the first great German victories, some of the Zentrum's most reputable leaders succumbed to the mirage of a 'victorious peace' and propagated the idea of mass annexations destined to provide an invincible foundation for German hegemony in Europe.

"On 1 November 1917 the old 'centrist' leader, Baron—now Count—de Hertling, is nominated Chancellor. A decorated parliamentarian, an 'ultramontane' leader, occupying Bismarck's place! . . ."

The accession of a Catholic to such a high function indeed speaks volumes on the long road travelled in Germany since the famous Kulturkampf, the battle for culture . . . and against the Roman Church, which had been so roughly handled by the "iron chancellor". In this "Prussified" empire, with its mainly Lutheran population, the Holy See had nevertheless managed to acquire a great prestige by its endless complacency in supporting and encouraging the plans of the warlike camarilla.

On the other hand, and in consequence, one may say, its attitude towards France was entirely hostile. This was particularly noticeable

during President Loubet's visit to Rome. It should be remembered that the Papacy was refusing to relent towards Italy for having, after its unification, established its capital at Rome, the former Pontifical State which it had occupied, and this led to the excommunication of the Italian royal family. Now Delcasse, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, was seeking a rapprochement with Italy:

"After the visit of Victor Emmanuel III to Paris," writes Adrien Dansette,[14] "which took place from 14 to 19 October 1903, the funds for President Loubet's visit to Rome were voted almost unanimously. 'Our actions are as offenceless as our intentions', Delcasse explained; and he pointed out 'how very dangerous it would be to let France believe that she could live in friendly relationship with the Supreme Head of the Catholic Church only at the price of neglecting or even sacrificing French interests...."

"President Loubet arrived in the Eternal City on 24 April 1904... He would very much have liked to be received by the Pope; but 'an inflexible protocol' forbade this and it was in vain that during the preceding months, several French prelates had been trying to arrange the matter with Pius X. ... On 28 April, Cardinal Merry del Val sent an indignant note of protest to the chancelleries. . . . Even the most moderate newspapers, such as Les Debats, criticized the Vatican's attitude, since President Loubet's journey had been undertaken for a 'serious political reason'."

The warning symptoms of the first world war

Charles Ledrd[15] says on this subject: "The drama draws near to its crisis. On 4 May, l'Osservatore Romano announced that the Holy See had protested to the French Government and that it had communicated its protest to the Catholic powers. What was the object of such a step? To prevent Loubet's precedent from becoming a habit. . . . Could the pontifical diplomats be unaware of this decisively important rapprochement which, after President Loubet's visit to Rome, was now becoming clearly apparent?"

This was precisely where the Holy Father's shoe pinched. The ill-humour so violently manifested on pretext of "protocol" had

[14]Op. cit., pp. 327 et seq.
[15]Un siecle sons la tiare (Bibliotheque catholique Amiot-Dumont, Paris 1955, pp. 124 et seq.).

in reality a far deeper cause: the Franco-Italian rapprochement, which was about to breach the Triple Alliance and so to weaken the "secular arm" of Austria-Germany.

There is, incidentally, clear proof of the Vatican's dishonesty in this question. The Pope was unable, according to the Vatican, to receive a head of state who, by visiting the King of Italy and Rome, appeared to recognize the legitimacy of the "usurpation" of that former Pontifical State. In fact, however, there had been precedents: on two occasions a head of state—William II—had been received at Rome by the King of Italy and the Pope at the same time. . . . Mgr. Cristiani,[16] a prelate shortly to be mentioned again, alludes to this in his recent book:

"Upon his accession, the new Emperor William II, when visiting his ally, the King of Italy, insisted also upon paying an official visit to the Pope, on 12 October 1888, a gesture which he was to repeat in 1903."

The same thing had happened with Edward VII, King of England, and with the Tzar.

This shows the value of the plea of "inflexible protocol" invoked by the Roman Curia.

Pope Pius X provokes France

"The French papers are in a bad temper. . . . Only the Croix continues to stigmatize the Republic",[17] wrote Yvon Lapaquellerie.

As a result of a storm of abuse from the press, the French Ambassador was dismissed; relations with the Vatican became increasingly strained; and, two years later, Parliament was voting a law of separation of the Church from the State. Thus for the Roman Church France became Enemy No. 1.

Mein Kampf

Adrien Dansette[18] reports the following:

"On 11 February 1906, the Pope promulgated the encyclical 'Vehementer'. It condemns the principle of separation. . . . Despite

[16] Le Vatican politique (Les Editions du Centurion, Paris 1957. p. 90), Nihil obstat. 19 April 1956, Imprimatur, 15 June 1956.
[17] Emile Combes (Flammarion, Paris 1929, p. 215).
[18] Histoire religieuse de la France contemporaine. pp. 357. 355.

the opinion of the French cardinals, it also condemns the methods. . . . He was to joke at the beginning of 1907, in front of Camille Bellaigue (Pope Pius X's confidant):

—Holy Father, what are you going to do in the French affair?

—Teach the French Government a lesson, of course.

This startled Bellaigue:

—Oh! Holy Father, do you really think of doing that ?

—Oh, yes, it has been in my mind a long time. . . .

"Some years later he was to say: 'Those people (the Liberals) want to be flattered and handled with velvet gloves. But one has to fight with fists. In a duel, blows are neither counted nor measured. . . . War is not fought with charity; it is a battle, a duel. . . ."

This is the duel which began in 1914, continued in 1939 and still goes on today, especially with the "stab in the back" that is being dealt by the Vatican in Algeria. The lasting character of the Church's hatred is seen again in what a "prelate of His Holiness"—as he calls himself—dares to write today on the origin of the first world war.

Mgr. Cristiani, or the art of falsifying history

"Through a strangely blind and ill-considered policy, our country seemed to take pleasure in provoking the bellicose appetites of its redoubtable neighbour . . . indeed, the Franco-Russian alliance seemed to threaten Germany with encirclement. . . ."[19]

It is easy to recognize in this the everlasting slogan, dear to both William II and Hitler. Nor need we be surprised to see it issue from the pen of one of His Holiness's prelates. Nevertheless we take the liberty of reminding this monseigneurial historian of a few dates.

The alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary had been in existence from 1879. Italy joined the two central empires in 1882, thus constituting the Triple Alliance. France, on the other hand, was alone, without an ally, in face of this bloc, and she put an end to her isolation—wrongly, according to Mgr. Cristiani, and "through a strangely blind and ill-considered policy"—by allying herself with Russia in 1894.

[19]Mgr. Cristiani: Le Vatican politique (Les Editions du Centurion. Paris 1957, pp. 102, 128), Nihil obstat. 19 April 1956, Imprimatur, 15 June 1956.

Such is the Vatican—not to say the German—brand of history, which is taught to the children of France in the so-called "free" schools. It is understandable that the "sectarians" who have been so much disgraced should not be enthusiastic about it.

Before leaving this historian and prelate—who may be French, but is certainly a Francophobe—let us glean from him a few more lines on the subject of the 1914 conflict:

"There were even those who dared to put out what was called the 'infamous rumour', by which evilly disposed people tried to pin on to the Church and the clergy the responsibility for the terrible scourge of the war. . . ."[20]

Infamous rumour! That sounds fine. In this vengeful expression the adjective and noun go very well together, and its euphony cannot be impeached. But can we say as much for its truth? This will be seen in the following chapter.

[20]Ibid.

CHAPTER II

PIUS X CAUSES THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

A pious fable: Pius X tries to avoid war and dies of grief when it comes. — Refutation of the fable by official documents: despatches from Count Palffy, Prince Schonburg and Baron Ritter. — Count Sforza's comments. — Reasons for the Vatican's bellicose attitude. — Pius X and his Secretary of State, Merry del Val, incite the Emperor of Austria to war while anticipating the extension of the conflict. — The Roman Church inaugurates the era of the great massacres.

"The Pope approves of Austria's harsh treatment of Serbia. The Cardinal Secretary of State does not see when Austria could make war if she does not decide to do so now."

BARON RITTER.

THE following may be read in the current "Concise Holy History" used in parochial catechisms:

"Pius X did all he could to prevent the war of 1914 and died of grief when he forsaw the evils it was about to unleash."

The fable is touching and has been thoroughly exploited by apologist writers.

At the risk of being taken for impious "rationalists", we shall take the liberty of drawing aside the honourable veil of fable in an attempt to clarify this question.

Let us first of all consult Abbe Brugerette,[1] an historian entirely free from the suspicion of anti-papist leanings:

"Pius X, who was extremely severe towards certain modernizing innovators, thought it better to abstain from all rigorous measures against the instigators of war, contrarily to those who prayed for one of those official and tragic excommunications which, in the Middle Ages, brought consternation into the souls of guilty kings and released subjects from their oath of allegiance. Was not Serbia, it was asked, a sufficient reason for the Pope to intervene ? Could he, should he, suffer an empire of fifty million men to prepare to crush a small neighbouring people of barely five million, a people which, to keep the peace, ever since 25 July, had given almost complete satisfaction to Austrian demands ? "

But it cannot be denied that Pope Pius X did not condemn this abuse of power.

Actually, there were already two camps, two blocs in Europe: one, that of the Western democracies, and the other, that of the imperialist and reactionary Central European Powers. No one had any doubt as to which side Pius X would support, and Pierre Dominique,[2] on the authority of Count Sforza's Memoirs and of

1Le pretre francais et la societe contemporaine, Nihil obstat. 6 October 1937, Imprimatur, 11 October 1937. (P. Lethielleux, Paris 1938, Vol. III, p. 548.)

2La politique des Jesuites (Grasset, Paris 1955, pp. 245-246).

diplomatic documents, shows how far the Vatican was from considering conciliation:

"But let us listen to this tocsin of 2 August 1914. . . . What did it mean for the Habsburgs? That Serbia, an Orthodox people, should be chastised. The prestige of Austria-Hungary, of the Habsburgs—who, with the Bourbons of Spain, were the Jesuits' last prop—and especially that of the heir, their man Francis Ferdinand, would thereby be greatly strengthened. For Rome, the matter was assuming an almost religious importance; the apostolic monarchy's success over tzarism might be considered as Rome's victory over the Eastern schism....

"We have access to a certain number of documents", continues Pierre Dominique, "whose analysis shows beyond doubt that, at least in the beginning, the Vatican looked with satisfaction upon a venture in which the crushing of Serbia would have entailed a decrease in the influence of Russia, whose prestige the Roman Church detested. . . . In these conversations the Secretary of State spoke explicitly in the name of the Pope, who, he informed the Austrian representative, deplored the fact that Austria had not before this inflicted upon the Serbs the punishment they deserved.."

Indeed, the despatch of 29 July 1914 from Count Palffy, Austrian Charge d'Affaires at the Vatican, to Count Berchtold, Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, leaves no doubt that Pope Pius X and the Curia wanted war. Here is the document:[3]

"In times of extreme political tension such as those we are now going through, human fantasy runs away with itself, redoubles its intensity and soon goes beyond the limits of common sense. Thus the last few days there has again been a rumour that Pope Pius X had intervened in the Serbian conflict and had been in touch with His Apostolic Imperial Majesty, entreating him to spare the Christian nations the horrors of war. An argument based on such absurd premises is of course bound to lead to the conclusion, as logical as it is erroneous, that there was in fact intervention by the Pope. The real opinion of the Curia is not without interest. When, two days ago, I went to the Cardinal Secretary of State, he did, of course, speak about the serious questions and problems that at present

[3]Veroffentlichungen der Kommission fur neuere Geschichte Osterreichs, 26 Wien—Leipzig 1930 pp. 893 and 894.

preoccupy the whole of Europe. His Eminence's conversation bore no sign of any particular goodwill or moderation. He unreservedly approved the note addressed to Serbia, and he indirectly expressed the hope that the Monarchy would hold out to the end. 'It goes without saying', remarked the Cardinal, 'that it is regrettable that Serbia should not have been brought low a long time ago." This declaration is equally consonant with the Pope's opinion: many a time during the past year His Holiness has expressed his regret that Austria-Hungary should have missed the opportunity to subdue its Danubian neighbour".

Austria's representative at the Vatican then endeavours to justify the attitude of Pope Pius X with arguments which, according to Pierre Dominique,[4] Count Sforza reports in these terms:

"One might well ask oneself why the Catholic Church adopts such a bellicose attitude. The answer is very simple. The Pope and the Curia see in Serbia a consuming disease which, little by little, has penetrated to the very marrow of the Monarchy and which, in time, would end by disintegrating it . . . Austria-Hungary is and remains the Catholic state par excellence, the strongest buttress of religion that is now left to the Church. For the Church the fall of this buttress would mean the loss of her strongest support; she would see the fall of her most devoted champion in the battle against Orthodoxy . . . In the light of this fact, it is not difficult to forge a link between the apostolic feelings and the spirit of war.'"

To this overwhelming document may be added another, no less official, establishing premeditation, on the part of Pope Pius X, in causing the outbreak of war. In July 1913, after the signature of the Peace of Bucarest, Austria-Hungary was already threatening to attack Serbia, and it was the turn of the Austrian prince Schonburg to go and acquaint himself with the feelings of the Vatican on the subject. This is how he reports[5] to Count Berchtold the conversations that he had there at the end of October and on 3 November 1913:

"Among the first subjects tackled by the Cardinal Secretary of State during our interview last week, as was to be expected, was the question of Serbia. The Cardinal began by expressing his joy at the energetic and commendable attitude which we have recently adopted. During today's audience (upon which I have made a

[4]Op. cit., pp. 247 and 248.
[5]Document P.A. XI/291.

separate report, see document A), His Holiness, who began the interview by mentioning the energetic step we have taken at Belgrade, made several very characteristic remarks. 'Certainly,' then said His Holiness, 'Austria-Hungary would have done better to punish the Serbs for all the mistakes that have been made."

* * *

Far be it from us to question the good faith of the Holy Father's apologists. At the same time, we cannot help asking by what miracle are his unequivocal appeals for war transformed, in their eyes, into appeals for peace? Let us confess in all humility that we are unable to explain this fantastic state of affairs. But no matter: we have now established, beyond all possible question, with official records, the way in which Pius X "did all he could to prevent the war of 1914".

Might it be said, nevertheless, in an attempt to excuse him, that he was hoping to see the conflict limited to Austria-Hungary and Serbia? Let us hear the pious Rene Bazin,[6] of the Academie francaise, another author who cannot be suspected of bias against the Vatican:

"Pius X ruled the Church from 4 August 1903 to 20 August 1914. On 2 June of that year, he entered his eightieth year. The war was approaching. He had forseen this upheaval of the world; he had more than once said to Cardinal Merry del Val, who used to bring him diplomatic despatches and other papers of the previous day, whenever he was explaining some serious question:

" What is that, compared with what is to come ? The Great War is coming: 1914 will not be over before it breaks out.

"To the Minister of Brazil, who was taking leave of him, Pius X said: 'You are fortunate', the Pope told him, 'you will not see the Great War at close quarters.'

"The diplomat, struck by this remark, wrote to several of his friends about it. Less than three months later, five nations were mobilizing their armies, and Germany was invading Belgium."

Can it be maintained, after this, that the Holy Father did not foresee the extension of the conflict? On the contrary, he foresaw it so well, that he expressly mentioned it before a diplomat, during an interview recorded in another official document which is quoted

[6]Pie X (Flammarion. Paris 1928, pp. 88 and 89)

by Count Sforza and Pierre Dominique:[7] "The day before, on 26 July, Baron Ritter, Charge d'Affaires of Bavaria at the Holy See, had written to his Government: "The Pope approves of Austria's harsh treatment of Serbia. He has no great opinion of the armies of Russia and France in the event of a war against Germany. The Cardinal Secretary of State does not see when Austria could make war if she does not decide to do so now".

"The authenticity of these two texts has been acknowledged after many debates in the Catholic press ..." notes Pierre Dominique.[8] "The key to the question, maintains Count Sforza, along with a few others, was the necessity of converting Francis Joseph to the idea of war. The opinions of the Pope and his minister were certainly the most likely to influence him. Hence the despatch of Count Palffy. . . ." So much for the "infamous rumour" that Mgr. Cristiani was exposing! And one of the "evil minds" propagating it is Count Sforza, one of the most well-known statesmen.

Thus, it is proved that Pius X and his Secretary of State, when they encouraged the most Catholic Emperor to make war, were coldly contemplating the consequences of their act: a general conflict which would set the Central European Empires against France and Russia. They believed they had accurately estimated the strength of the different forces involved.

But, what His Holiness and his accomplice had not foreseen was the participation in the war of England and finally of the entire Anglo-Saxon world, a participation which was to thwart their plans, tip the scales in favour of France and liberate the Orthodox populations from the Viennese yoke.

* * *

Hence the responsibility for the crime is beyond doubt—an enormous crime which, over a period of four years, was to throw into the charnel-house millions of "Christian" corpses, all the flower of European youth, and a crime all the more odious for being completely premeditated.

[7]This despatch from Baron Ritter appears in Bayerische Dokumtnie zum Kriegsausbruch III, p. 206 (AUTHOR'S NOTE).
[8]La politique des Jesuites. pp. 248 and 250.

One may say quite specifically that in 1914, the Roman Church started the series of hellish wars. It was then that the tribute of blood which she has always taken from the peoples began to swell into a veritable torrent.

CHAPTER III

BENEDICT XV, THE PRO-GERMAN POPE

THE new Pontiff tries to help the Austro-Germans: his intrigues to prevent Italy and the United States from joining the Allies. The French Catholics call him the "Boche Pope". — He no longer speaks of German war crimes. — His attempts in favour of a separate peace, then of a "stalemate" peace in 1917 to save Germany and Austria-Hungary from defeat. — The grave accusation of a Catholic, Louis Canet. — Mgr. Pacelli, the future Pope Pius XII, sent as Nuncio to Munich, meets William II and takes an active part in the intrigues of the "Boche Pope". — The Holy See excluded from the Peace Conference at Versailles, at the request of Italy. This inadequate sanction does not prevent the Vatican from preparing its revenge.

"The enemies of civilization have found valuable support where they should have found nothing but invincible horror".

The American, WHITNEY WARREN, accuses the Vatican at a conference held on 15 April 1918

"So it is true that in this war, where we believe that upon our victory depends the salvation of the Christian heritage, the Pope has worked against us like an enemy." LOUIS CANET.

ON 20 August 1914, Pope Pius X died, and it certainly was not—despite what his biographers say—from sorrow at seeing the outbreak of a conflict which he had ardently desired. Roger Peyrefitte, in his Les cles de Saint-Pierre is rather of the opinion that he died of joy. It may also be supposed that England's entry into the war on 4 August, by enabling him to foresee the defeat of his champions, caused him an emotional shock that was to prove fatal. However that may be, he entered into the "peace of the Saviour" soon after having dealt his decisive blow to that of the earth. At that time, Mgr. Pacelli, the future Pope Pius XII, was beginning as a Vatican diplomat under the eminent guidance of Mgr. Merry del Val, the very Germanophile and very bellicose Secretary of State. The memory of these wonderful years Pope Pius XII must surely have had in mind when, forty years later, he was occupying the throne of St. Peter—how, we shall soon see—and, when during the second world war, he made a point of canonizing his great predecessor, who had done everything to set the first slaughter in motion.

But let us leave these two good apostles of the Pax Christi, and concern ourselves with the immediate successor of Pius X, Pope Benedict XV.

As Adrien Dansette[1] writes:

"Out of Catholic Austria-Hungary, a Germany which was Protestant, but had nevertheless a highly organized Catholic minority, and in a way embodied the notions of authority and hierarchy, France (shortly Italy as well), Catholic but both "bad

[1]Histoire religieuse de la France contemporaine, pp. 488 and 489

parishioners" as Mgr. Duchesne used to say, Protestant England, and schismatic Russia—all of which except the last, were fighting in the name of liberalism—how could the Holy See have failed to prefer the first group?"

Indeed, this preference manifested itself in an obvious and even scandalous way, right from the early days of the war, as Father Brugerette[2] points out:

"Benedict XV's silence on Germany's tremendous ambition and the vain pan-German doctrine which broke all the universally accepted rules of international morality, is astonishing. And it was therein, it was said, that the origin of the present war was to be found.

"On 10 January 1915, a decree signed by Cardinal Gasparri, Secretary of State to Benedict XV, prescribed a day of prayer to hasten the return of peace. . . . One of the obligatory exercises of piety was the recitation of a prayer that Benedict XV had been good enough to write himself ... the sense of guilt emerging from its terms roused French feelings to such a degree that, to calm them down, the Government seized the pontifical document. . . . Indeed, the prayer for peace was taken as a pernicious propaganda designed to weaken the efforts of the French, just when the German hordes were feeling that irresistible pressure which was to drive them from French soil, and when the Kaiser was beginning to see the terrible consequences of his unpardonable crimes.

"Yesterday I saw in 'La Croix', wrote a fervent Catholic lady to her priest, that the Holy Father orders prayers for peace. Peace, at present, is desired only by Germany. To pray for peace is to pray for Germany. This is more than I can do. Would you kindly let me know just how far our conscience is bound by those prescriptions of the Holy See which concern neither faith nor morality. . . .

"And in certain circles there were vehement protests against the pontifical measure because it coincided with the most ardent wishes of the Central European Empires . . . it was the result of a secret agreement between Berlin and the Vatican.

And Father Brugerette concludes that "The Pope does not like France, and, in a word, the Pope is 'Boche'!"

Let us listen once again to Charles Ledre,[3] on the subject of the

[2]Le pretre francais et la societe contemporaine, vol. III, pp. 526 el seq.
[3]Un siecle sous la tiare (Bibliotheque catholique Amiot-Dumont, Paris 1955, pp. 154 and 155)

pontifical note of 1 August 1917. "The Pope, whose Nuncio at Munich, Mgr. Pacelli, had had conversations with the Chancellor of the Reich, Emperor William II and Emperor Charles of Austria, was pressing the belligerent states to start negotiations for peace. This was received in France with a chorus of recriminations, some sad and some vehement. 'Most Holy Father', exclaimed Father Sertillanges, from the pulpit of the Madeleine, 'we cannot, for the moment, heed your appeals for peace. . . .We are sons who sometimes say: "No!" like the seeming rebel of the Scriptures'. The eloquent Dominican was to pay for the "impropriety" of such a lesson, taught where it was and to the head of the Christian world, with a long and uncomfortable retirement. . . .

"The Holy See, by trying to persuade Italy and, later, the United States not to enter the war, was, according to Father Brugerette, 'acting against our own "interests" and serving those of our enemies'. . . . The Germanic influence was extremely active in pontifical circles. . . .

"Benedict XV has been reproached with not having officially taken to task those responsible for the war ... the serious violations of Right and the horrors of which Germany was many a time guilty."

The desperate position of the Central European Empires

The Holy Father appeared all the more insistent in his interventions as the Austro-Germans, at that time, could sense the approach of their final defeat. In 1934, l'Illustration[4] published a particularly well documented study on the subject:

"In the extracts which follow we quote Count Poldzer-Hoditz, who for twenty years was friend and adviser to Charles, Emperor of Habsburg:

'On 14 February 1917, Emperor Charles said to me: "We are going to lose the war; we are bound to lose the war if America comes in. It is unfair to encourage our people with hopes of victory. What should we do?" I replied that it was surely not desirable that our enemies should know the seriousness of our position, but the Emperor replied: " We certainly do not have to say that we are at the end of our

[4]L'Illustration, 2 June 1934.

tether! But if the nation is constantly hearing about our brilliant position, it will never understand why concessions must be made in order to obtain peace!" "

France and the pontifical note of 1 August 1917

"October 1916 was the critical month for the Central European Powers . . .", asserts Father Brugerette,[5] "then appeared this new note of 1 August 1917 wherein Benedict XV urged the belligerents to start negotiating for peace. . . .

"It was not until four years later, through the declarations of Mr. Erzberger, published in 'Germania' of 22 April 1921, that the peace proposal launched by the Pope in August 1917 was known to have been preceded by a secret agreement between the Holy See and Germany. . . . The Holy See, he had added, had strongly endeavoured to bring Germany and England nearer on the question of Belgium, which would have resulted in the isolation of France and would have encouraged Germany to keep Alsace and Lorraine. . . ."

The courageous Father Brugerette continues: "It must be remembered what a Germanophile spirit dominated the entourage of the Holy See at that time. . . . Whether professors or ecclesiastics, they would stop at nothing to inculcate into the Italian clergy and the Catholic world of Rome respect and admiration for the German army, and disdain and hatred of France. . . . It was the right thing to wager on the victory of the Central European Empires. Even 'l'Osservatore Romano', the Holy See's official organ, was considered Germanophile.

"On 2 August 1916, the Italian battleship Leonardo da Vinci blew up in the Gulf of Taranto: 21 officers and 221 men were drowned. Investigations, directed towards German espionage, led to Mgr. von Gerlach, who, warned of his imminent arrest, took flight. This case against him was resumed in 1919. Von Gerlach failed to appear and was condemned to 20 years' hard labour".[6]

The Vatican has in its ranks the Von Gerlachs it deserves. Moreover, it took good care not to stigmatize the criminal act of its chamberlain. A similar piece of sabotage was being carried out in

[5]Le pretre francais et la societe contemporaine, vol. III, p. 540.
[6,7]Ibid., pp. 544 and 549.

the United States through the good offices of the Privy Chamberlain, Franz von Papen.

* * *

To the mass of evidence emanating from Catholic writers which we have just read, we shall add another item, and a very important one: extracts from an excellent study published in 1918 and mentioned by Father Brugerette[7] in the following terms:

"It was soon known that the two articles published by the Revue de Paris—articles which were remarkable for the prodigious luxury of their documentation, came from a Catholic pen. The author was Louis Canet, former pupil at the French School of Rome, a disciple of Mgr. Duchesne and friend of Father Laberthonniere, his spiritual brother. The author no doubt obtained most of his information from the political services to which he was attached during the war. His wide culture and the gallican tendencies of his mind later enabled Louis Canet to become Director of Ecclesiastical Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs".

These articles constitute such vitally important material that they warrant reproduction here of the following, somewhat lengthy, extracts:

Irrefutable Accusations

"Benedict XV", writes Louis Canet,[8] "does not belong to our party. There was no point in saying this, so long as no one in France was trying to lead French Catholics away from French politics, and it was charitable to say nothing so as not to grieve those good people who are pleased to believe, and who were doing their utmost to show that the Pope, for love of justice, had declared himself for the Entente. But this is no longer so today. Not only are we told that the Pope is with us, we are told that we should be with the Pope; this is admitting that he is not one of us, and undertaking to leave our camp for his. . . .

The interests of the Holy See and the two coalitions

"Thus a distinction must be made between the two functions that history has united under the majesty of the Tiara. The Pope is the

[8] La politique de Benoit XV (Revue de Paris, 15 October and 1 November 1918).

Sovereign Pontiff, absolute master of the Catholic Church, supreme judge of faith and morality. But he is also heir to the political power which, today as in earlier days, is still subject to the same influences as are all human affairs, influences for evil, prone to error. . . .

"It is said, and rightly said, that for the first time since the birth of Christianity, the entire world, believers and unbelievers, turned towards the pulpit of Peter in order to hear the word of Justice for which it was hungering and thirsting; and Peter's successor did not satisfy it. So bitter was the disappointment that, it is to be feared, the remembrance of it will never fade. But surely everyone will understand how cruel was the alternative. A choice had to be made between two dangers: either to sacrifice without a word not only (and not for the first time) the dignity of the Apostolic See, but the honour of Catholicism itself; or by speaking out to break the fragile link that holds the Church together, and to see the seamless garment torn even more than it is already—and, indeed, torn to pieces. . . .

"If the shepherd was able to hesitate between the two coalitions, the same was no longer true of the judge or the sovereign; but whereas the judge was obliged to condemn the Austro-German crime, the sovereign was almost inevitably obliged to make common cause with the criminal powers, not only because of political doctrine and historic tradition, but also because of personal and pressing interests. . . . Thus it was that Mgr. Szeptycky, Rutherian Archbishop of Lemberg and Metropolitan of Galicia, who, it is believed, had been given full powers in order to enable him to bring back Russia to the Roman fold—had begun, well before the war, to engineer the separation of the Ukraine; that half the Catholics of Rumania were placed under the authority of a German archbishop; and that the Magyars of Transylvania were withdrawn from that of the Roman ordinaries. At the same time Benedictines from Beuron were installed in the Greek pontifical college of Saint Athanasius (in 1913) and at the primate's abbey of Saint Anselm, on the Aventino. From the reign of Leo XIII, dom Boniface Krug went to the important abbey of Mount Cassin, and Mgr. Dobbing to the very gates of Rome, at the episcopal see of Sutri. While others were giving their money, their love, their lives, Germany was giving the whole strength of her organization—which was far more important.

"Germany may be wrong on some counts; she might even be wrong on all; but she has strength on her side, and this is a quality which atones for many sins....

"The Holy See having its own interests, is naturally free to have its own policy, but on condition that it does not claim to cover it with the cloak of religious authority and impose it as a matter of conscience upon Catholics the world over. But popes are not in the habit of making such subtle distinctions; unlike the French, they do not consider their apostolic responsibility in the abstract, without taking human contingencies into account. Their strength lies in fusing everything, politics with religion, the interests of the Holy See with those of the Church, and the interests of the Church with those of people at large, so as to turn general policy to further the end of their own particular policy and to use to that end the dominating influence which they acquire by virtue of their religious role. That is what Benedict XV did. . . . Now what we are trying to do here is precisely to bring out, with irrefutable proof and fully authenticated evidence, the character and tendencies of pontifical policy. Thus we hope to show without any possibility of contradiction:

1.—That Benedict XV, because he wanted to consider the war as a vulgar conflict of ambitions, refused to recognize the violation of Belgian neutrality as an unforgivable crime; refused to admit that the Entente had more respect for justice than the imperial powers, and that Germany's way of making war was far worse than that of her adversaries.

2.—That consequently, because he considered the ambitions of France more dangerous and more inflexible, he thought it reasonable to exhort the United States to refuse to export arms and munitions of war; to take steps to dissuade the neutral Powers from supporting us; and finally to try to split the Entente and so reduce the London pact to empty words.

The sources

"His apologists will protest that none of this is apparent from the public and official acts of the Holy See, and that it is only fair, as the Pope himself asked in a letter dated 11 July 1915 to the Archbishop of Paris, that one should not look for his real thoughts anywhere else. They would be right if the records were clear and

conformed to the truth. . . . But, in order to decipher this wizard's book of spells one must be in a position to give each document its proper value and to know the validity of every source of information.

"The 'Osservatore Romano', as everyone knows is the unofficial organ of the Holy See; yet it has been accused, on the pretence that it is now nothing but a poor reflection of the Wolff Agency's opinions, of following its personal whims in defiance of the Pope's wishes. If the accusers knew what instruments were given to the Director of the paper by Benedict XV immediately upon his accession and what part the State Secretariat and Cardinal Gasparri himself took in the drafting of the articles, they would be more careful. So much so, that without going into this mystery, one need do no more than read a letter dated 22 November, from the Secretary of State to the Archbishop of Lyons: 'Your Eminence is not unaware of the fact that, at the outbreak of the present war, the Holy See, equally solicitous for the shepherds and flock of the universal Church, thought fit to observe, and has ever since maintained, the strictest and most absolute impartiality towards the different belligerent nations, and that it peremptorily recommended the Catholic press (in particular the Roman press) to do the same. I can assure you that the Holy See's directives and advice have been faithfully followed by the Osservatore Romano, which is under its direct authority, as well as by the Corriere d 'Italia, the principal organ of the publishing house'.

"This could not be expressed more clearly: the Holy See assumes full responsibility for what these two papers publish. ... If after that they do not strike the same note, it does not follow that they should be set one against the other; it should merely be concluded that each is playing in the concert the part assigned to it. Moreover they do not comprise the entire orchestra. . . .

The pontifical sentence

"There are two opposing theories about the present war: "The Entente accuses Germany of having wilfully provoked the war in order to bring the whole world under her domination; of having started it by the execrable violation of Belgian neutrality; and of deliberately continuing it with methods peculiar to herself, methods which are condemned by established rights and human conscience alike. Germany protests that she did not want the

the conflict, and that it is her enemies who, by compelling her to take up arms to save her life, have reduced her to the necessity of disregarding all law.

"It is important to know which of these two theories the Holy See accepts; for if, from being, as we are now, both victims and judges, we are to be degraded to the level of mere rivals, we have at the same time become the adversary's equals before good and evil, deprived of the moral resilience which was sustaining our courage and renewing our strength. This being so, we are entitled to complain and to appeal against the wrong that is being done to us; to accuse those who are not with us of being against us and those who are not against Germany of being her accomplices, whatever may happen.

I.— Violation of Belgian neutrality

"Belgium was, by virtue of the treaty of 19 April 1839, a permanently neutral state.

"Summoned on 2 August 1914 to allow the passage of the German troops, Belgium, believing that 'no nation, however weak, should ignore its duty, and sacrifice its honour by yielding to force', was faithful to its word. Never yet had a nation preferred death to dishonour, and for the first time in history a government sacrificed an entire nation to martyrdom out of respect for a piece of paper .. .

"The Holy See was silent. But its representatives spoke, and declared that Belgium was to blame for not having resigned itself to the inevitable, and for having gone into the battle at the side of atheist France when a mere show of resistance would have been enough to save its face, and, finally, for the sake of misconceived honour and a lack of Christian prudence, for having brought misfortune upon herself. Fine arguments, but not of juridical validity. The issue was really one of rights: Germany confessed through her Chancellor that she had acted against them, and the supreme guardian of moral law remained dumb before the confession. . ..

II.—The re-establishment of justice

"The terrible indictment against Germany being thus brushed aside, what does the Pope have to say? 'Public scourges', said

Benedict XV, 'are there for the expiation of the sins which have made public authorities and nations stray from God. . . .'

"... Reference must now be made to the work that don Lucantonnio has just dedicated to Cardinal Gasparri, La Supranationalite du Saint-Siege; Benedict XV having supervised the planning of the book, insisted on revising the proofs himself, and it is there that one must seek the true expression of his innermost thoughts. It teaches that the calamities which are ravaging the earth today have their real origin in 'doctrinal liberalism': states claimed that they could break away from the tutelage of the popes and forcibly separate civil power from religious power; the present conflict is a kind of epilogue to all the anger, all the fury and all the hatred which, having smouldered in the hearts of different nations and burst into tumults and domestic upheavals, could only result in a general outbreak of barbarous and pitiless war, in which human brotherhood has been drowned in an ocean of blood. Thus, 'the facts speak with terrifying eloquence; the Papacy, so much attacked, is vindicated by events'; and 'any people which is not climbing towards the summits of the faith, is little by little going down to the depths of a shameful slavery, whose chains it will have forged with its own hands.'

III.—War methods

"After a criticism of the purpose comes a criticism of the means. Let us for a moment adopt the hypothesis that the ambitions of the Entente do not differ in kind from those of the Central European Empires; we might still hope that a distinction could be made between our war methods and theirs. This is sheer illusion: every accusation made by the Allies against the Imperial Powers is made by the Imperial Powers against the Allies with as much justification if not more, and 'war is war', says Benedetto Governa philosophically. By these two arguments the balance of right and wrong is once more restored.

IV.—Protection of the favoured

"To the dreaded question: 'Do you remain neutral before this crime?' Benedict XV replied 'There has been no crime. . . .'

". . . In the eyes of Benedict XV, therefore, the situation is the exact opposite of what it seems to us to be: it is Germany that is pacific, and the Entente that is bellicose; it is therefore the Entente that must be forced to give way. . . .

"Everyone who frequented the most highly placed prelates as well as humbler folk at the Vatican during the years 1915 and 1916, was told in confidence that the French were mad to trust the English, and to believe that they would ever willingly abandon the Channel coast and the port of Rouen. Italy herself—who would ever have thought it?—was not free from danger; really not, for the British Cabinet had expressed a wish to take a lease on Sicily.

"There was only one way of replying to this insolence, and that was to lay claim to Malta. But Baron Sonnino was strangely weak. . . . This was more or less the argument of the Austrian diplomats who, in the spring of 1915, were promising wonders to Italy, as a price for her neutrality. The pontifical press was pleased by these intrigues; and in the spring of this year 1918, the Civitta Cattolica was still surprised that the Royal Government should have laid claim to some of the provinces under Austria without also asserting her rights to Malta, Corsica and the Cote d'Azur.

"Then there was Russia. It was no use inciting the French against the English and the Italians against both, unless it was possible at the same time to break the Franco-Russian alliance. . . .

"And what was worse, was that there were suggestions for a separate peace. That Germany had more than once tried to negotiate separately with Belgium, is a matter of history. . . . From 2 to 10 January 1916, a Catholic German mission, including among others Belzer, Herold, Irl, Welstein, Meyer, Neuhaus and Kuckhof, went to Belgium to preach, in the Pope's name, as they said, the doctrine of the separate peace. The Belgian bishops protested that it was not true that the Pope was behind them, but the Nuncio kept quiet and the Pope was dumb. . . .

"The Holy See was then thinking of a Franco-Austrian rapprochement, whereby it flattered itself it could lead France either to sign a separate peace, or to urge her allies towards a general peace. . . . The Pope, at the Consistory of December 1916, raised three of our bishops to the rank of cardinal, paid homage to the land of Clovis, Saint Louis and Joan of Arc, and expressed the wish that France

should once more become the agent of the divine will. A few weeks later, on 31 March 1917, Prince Sixte de Bourbon gave Emperor Charles's famous letter to the President of the Republic.

"The manoeuvre having failed on this side of the Alps, it had to be repeated elsewhere, in England, in America, and above all in Italy. Ever since the spring of 1917 the Holy See had shown the keenest solicitude for Italy and had spared no pains to make her believe that only the throne of Saint Peter had the power to rescue her from danger. ... If this ingenious doctrine should gain credence it would result in complete confusion. . . .

"To shatter the material strength of the Entente in order to get the better of its offensive fervour, and to ruin its moral prestige in order to soften its courage and bring it to reason—this was the whole policy of Benedict XV, and the purpose of his neutrality has always been, and still is entirely designed to hamstring us. . . .

"So it is true that in this war, in which we believe that on our victory depends the salvation of the Christian heritage, the Pope has worked against us as an enemy. ..."

So, as it seems to us, the attitude of Benedict XV during the first world war is clearly demonstrated. Under the orders of the man who has been christened the "Boche Pope", Mgr. Pacelli, his best diplomat, was sent as Nuncio to Munich, to establish contact with William II to try to negotiate with France a separate peace which could have saved the Central European Empires. For him this was the beginning of a long diplomatic career entirely devoted to promoting German hegemony in Europe, a career that he was to pursue under Pius XI before assuming himself the tiara. But no matter how Germanophile his predecessors might have appeared, it can be said that the student surpassed his masters.

The scheme failed, thanks to Clemenceau's obstinacy. The Treaty of Versailles, in July 1919, put the finishing touch to the defeat of His Holiness's champions.

The Pope had in fact nothing to do with working out plans for the new Europe—a circumstance which is not difficult to understand; but—and this is significant—this ban was primarily due to Italy, the most fervent Catholic of all the allied Powers. Three people well-known at the Vatican, among others, bear witness to this:

"During the first world war. Benedict XV had had to overcome

Italian distrust of any unwarrantable interference on the part of the Vatican in international questions. An article of the secret treaty signed in London in 1915 lifnited the Papacy's right to direct participation in the peace conferences: England, France and Russia undertook to support Italy, should she see fit to oppose the possible participation of a representative of the Holy See in the preliminary negotiations for the settling of the problems raised by the present conflict."[9]

"In 1919, a peace conference was to open in Paris and to build a new Europe. It was a conference that was to decide the world's fate for many a long year. But the Papacy did not participate in this conference. In pursuance of article XV of the London pact (26 April 1915), which defined the conditions on which Italy would take part in the war, Baron Sonnino had obtained from the other Allies a promise that they would oppose any intervention on the part of the Papacy in the peace negotiations."[10]

"The Holy See was excluded from Versailles. Italy was the first to rejoice over this. It would almost seem that she went to war solely in order that article XV should be included in the London pact—the article in pursuance of which the Allies solemnly undertook to keep the Vatican out of the peace conference. . . ."[11]

It is clear that the Holy See's nearest neighbours were also the most distrustful.

Unfortunately, this ban was the only measure taken by the Allies against their most implacable enemy. Who, after all, would ask for sanctions to be taken against the Vatican ? This weakness was to be paid for dearly by Europe and the whole world. Pius XI, succeeding Benedict XV, was to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor. He was to stir up Fascism, then Nazism, and, with Mgr. Pacelli, to prepare the 1939-1945 war of revenge.

Meanwhile, the Vatican, through its influence with the Allies, was doing all it could to save its German friends and proteges from their well-deserved punishment as war criminals. Irrefutable proof of this is to be found in the report which Count de Salis, H.M. Minister on special mission to the Holy See,[12] addressed to Earl Curzon, Foreign Secretary.

[9]Camille Cianfarra: La guerre et le Vatican (Le Portulan, Paris 1946, p. 240)..
[10]Charles Pichon: Histoire du Vatican (Sefi, Paris 1946, p. 143).)
[11]Nazareno Padellaro: Pie XII (Julliard, Paris 1950, p. 115).

Indeed, Minister Satis wrote from Rome on 26 January 1920 that he had had a long conversation with Cardinal Gasparri on the subject of legal proceedings against the Emperor William and the superior officers of the German army:

"The Holy See, the Cardinal said, had always thought desirable that for two reasons the proceedings against the Kaiser should be abandoned".

The two reasons are then given: to avoid the continuance of national hatreds and to prevent the shaking of the thrones of all the monarchical States!

Cardinal Gasparri, after enlarging upon these and other far-fetched and puerile reasons, which to his idea were strongly against a trial of the superior officers, had added, "The Holy See trusted that the British Government. . . would not insist on these proceedings; they hoped as much from the French Government to whom these remarks had been transmitted."

[12]Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939, First Series, vol. IX, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1960, p. 619.

Part II

PREPARATIONS FOR REVENGE

CHAPTER I

PIUS XI INSTIGATES FASCISM

Pius XI succeeds Benedict XV. — The authoritarian character of the new Pope. His admiration for the Fascist chief: "Mussolini is a wonderful man!" His horror of Socialism. — Secret deals between the Vatican and Mussolini. A bargain is struck. The Church will ensure the triumph of Fascism. — Don Sturzo, Chief of the Catholic Party, has full rights voted to Mussolini, just as, ten years later, Mgr. Kaas, Chief of the Catholic Zentrum, will have full rights voted to Hitler. — The Duce settles his debt towards Pius XI: the clergy in places of honour at all Fascist ceremonies, Mussolini defends the Papacy, the Fascist militia takes its model from the Jesuits, the Liberals are either deported or assassinated, finally comes the Lateran Treaty with re-establishment of the Pope's temporal sovereignty, concordat and rich endowment to the Holy See. — The conquest of Ethiopia seen with favour by the Vatican. Mgr. Schuster, Cardinal-Archbishop of Milan, calls it "a Catholic crusade". — Mussolini as agent between the Holy See and Hitler. The Nazi Party financed by Rome. — The influence in Spain: secret treaty with Primo de Rivera, then assistance to General Franco. — The Fascist "mystique" and the aggression of Albania on Good Friday. — Iginio Giordani writes: "He who is near the Sword is near to God". — Mussolini, prototype of the Vatican brand of dictator.

> "The Pope and the clergy are hand in hand with the regime. Moreover, there is never an important Fascist ceremony at which the clergy are not in the place of honour."
>
> L'Illustration, 24 September 1932.

FIRST of all, who was Pius XI? Let us listen to Francois Charles-Roux,[1] former French Ambassador to the Vatican, who knew the Holy Father personally and who, during his eight years in Rome, had many an opportunity to speak with him:

"His reputation as an authoritarian and self-willed pontiff, knowing what he wants and wanting it strongly, is indeed well established. . . . Governing must come fairly naturally to him. He governs a great deal unaided . . . the Church's government is autocratic. . . . Pius XI was in no way the blessing type. . . . Pius XI was firmly convinced that none of the great men of this world could reach his level. . . ."

On this last point, the newly elected Pope was only asserting once more the constant pretensions of the Holy See, as they are expressed in the ritual formula of the coronation.

Megalomaniac by calling, one might say, he had, even before donning the tiara, singled out a lay fellow-megalomaniac, who seemed fit to serve his ends.

Still only Cardinal Achille Ratti, this is what he said, in 1921, in front of the writer Luc Valti about the future Italian dictator:

"Mussolini is making rapid headway and, with elemental strength, will conquer all in his path. Mussolini is a wonderful man—Do you hear me?—a wonderful man! He is a new convert, since he comes from the ranks of the extreme left, he has the zeal of the novice to spur him on. Moreover, he recruits his adepts from the school benches, raising them all of a sudden to the dignity of manhood, of armed men. He seduces and fanatizes them, reigning over their imaginations. Do you realize what that means and what power it gives him ? The future is his."[2]

[1] Huit ans au Vatican (Flammarion, Paris 1947, pp. 14 et seq.).
[2] L'Illustration, 9 January 1937, p. 33.

Pius XI, Socialism's bitter enemy

Charles Ledre[3] points out that "In several of his most notable speeches, the Rerum novarum Pope has denounced the perils of 'Socialism' for society as well as for religion. He told the faithful that they should arm against it. He never gave up the fight and Pius XI will be able to write that Socialism was 'the principal adversary aimed at in his encyclicals. . . . 'No one', he says, "can be both a good Catholic and a real Socialist'."

The Holy Father's attitude is one of social and political reaction. In cold blood he planned a war to the death against everything Socialist, and in order to carry it out he supported that Nazi-Fascism which was to cause so much bloodshed. Ledre adds:

"Pius XII often reiterated that the Church's condemnations of the 'various systems of Socialism' are still valid".[4]

* * *

The political position of the Holy See was thus quite clear. That of Mussolini, on the other hand, could have appeared to be just the opposite:

According to F. Nitti,[5] former President of the Italian Council of Ministers, "In 1914, Mussolini was running the Italian Socialist organ Avanti and was an intransigent Marxist. In March 1919, he founded a first Fascist group in Milan, while retaining the ideas and attitude of a Socialist and trade-unionist. He encouraged every strike as well as the occupation of the factories. . . . Mussolini called for a national Constituent. Its first task was to proclaim the Italian Republic, the people's right to vote, the abolition of the standing army, a universal ban on the manufacture of arms, the suppression of all titles of chivalry and nobility, the dissolution of all joint-stock companies, the abolition of stock exchanges, the confiscation of unearned incomes, and the payment of the national debt by well-to-do classes only. . . . The land was to be given over to the peasants."

[3] Un siecle sous la tiare (Bibliotheque catholique Amiot-Dumont, Paris 1955, pp. 199, 200 and 207)
[4] Ibid.
[5] La desagregation de l'Europe (Editions Spes, Paris 1938, pp. 315 and 318).

What happened in the meantime, that could have reconciled two such opposed views as that of the Vatican and that of the chief Fascist?

Francois Charles-Roux[6] will tell us:

"While the future Duce was still just an ordinary deputy, Cardinal Gasparri, Secretary of State, had had a secret interview with him at the Roman home of a Catholic senator, Count Santucci, at Ara Coeli. The Fascist chief straightway showed his readiness to acknowledge the Pope's temporal sovereignty over a small part of Rome"— and if need be to dissolve the Chamber and modify the electoral law.

" 'From this conversation', concluded Cardinal Gasparri when he reported it to me, 'I understand that with this man, should he come into power, we could get what we wanted".

"I am leaving aside what he reported on the negotiation between the secret agents of Pius XI and Mussolini...."

Here will be found the crux of the question, that of the conversion of the revolutionary.

" Mussolini had been told of the remark made by General Badoglio, Chief of the General Staff: 'Five minutes' firing and no more will be heard of Fascism'."[7]

The head of this movement was well aware of his weakness without the support of the Church. Consequently, he hastened to give a warm welcome to its envoys. The temptation was great for this ambitious man: if he would discard his original doctrine, his power would be ensured. The bargain was struck.

The rise of Fascism

"We feel", said Claudio Treves, "as if we were caught up in a sinister wind of counter-revolution, before the revolution itself." The right wing does not hide its disdain of popular sovereignty and its hatred of democracy, whereas the centre wavers.... The presence of a compact group of a hundred Catholic deputies, which could have been a force for ministerial and political stabilization becomes a force for disruption, owing to this group's subordination to the Vatican. ... It is governed by a Sicilian ecclesiastic, don Sturzo.

[6]Huit ans au Vatican (Flammarion, Paris 1947, pp. 47 et seq.).
[7]Pietro Nenni: Six ans de guerre civile en Italie (Librairie Valois, Paris 1930, p. 136).

"The party wings reach as far right as the black aristocracy. The vestries have been the font in which this party has been baptized."[8]

About this Catholic party and its chief Geo London and Charles Pichon[9] say:

"The role of Father don Sturzo was to bring to the party his rare qualities of organizer and chief. . . . Authoritarian, tenacious, ardent and punctilious, he constrained the party's 109 deputies to assiduity, discipline, and the block vote, so that they from the outset formed a compact mass at Montecitorio... don Sturzo was imposing upon the new President of the Council his famous nine points, which ensured substantial benefits to religious interests . . . and it was he who kept the Government under his thumb.

"Parties such as those whose activity has just been outlined, have obviously obtained real advantages for the Holy See."

"On 16 November 1922", writes Pietro Nenni[10], "the Chamber was to pass a vote of confidence to Mussolini, by 306 votes to 116, and at this session the Catholic group, supposedly Christian Democrat, voted unanimously for the first Fascist government. October 31 witnessed the apotheosis of the Blackshirts who had marched on Rome. ... Go ahead, you heroes of the coldly premeditated massacres of Perugia and Turin! This is the apotheosis of crime....* Wolves are always wolves'. . . . The Monarchy and the Church have made the party what it is.. . ."

Ten years later the same manoeuvre had the same outcome in Germany. The massive vote of Mgr. Kaas's Catholic Zentrum made certain of the dictatorship of Nazism.

Now Mussolini paid his debt to his masters

"1 May 1923. Undoubtedly, Fascism, by adopting the attitude it has towards the Vatican, can be certain of the approval of Catholicism . . .", remarks Domenico Russo[11], "the reappearance of the crucifix in the schools, the reintroduction of religious teaching, the new protection of Italian religious congregations abroad, Mussolini's defence, in Parliament, of the Papacy. . . ."

[8] Pietro Nenni: op. cit., p. 83.
[9] Le Vatican et le monde moderne (Editions des Portiques, Paris 1933, pp. 382 et seq.).
[10] Six ant de guerre civile en Italie, pp. 146 et seq.
[11] Mussolini et le fascisme (Plon, Paris 1923, p. 123).

Likewise, l'Illustration points out that: "Even at the price of the most cruel experience, Fascism depends upon all the old forces of the past . . . the Pope and the clergy are hand in hand with the new regime. Moreover, there is never an important Fascist ceremony at which the clergy are not in the place of honour".[12]

As will be seen later, in Hitler's Germany, the Fascist phalanx bears the unmistakable brand of its origins.

Here are a few extracts, quoted by Domenico Russo,[13] from the Rule book of the Fascist militias, which strongly resemble the militia of von Ledochowski, General of the Jesuits:

"The Fascist Party is, by definition, a militia. The Fascist militia is in the service of God and the Italian nation. . . .

"The Fascist soldier knows only his duty. His sole right is to do it and to love it. Be he officer or soldier, he must obey with humility and command with strength. The obedience of this militia must be blind, absolute, even at the highest level of the hierarchy, the Supreme Chief and the Executive Committee of the Party".

No doubt it is in virtue of this blind and absolute obedience that the "Blackshirts" committed so many crimes on the orders of their Chief. Count Sforza, in his memoirs recalls the long list of assassinations which marked the dictator's career.

Mussolini the criminal

After having recalled the circumstances of the assassination of Matteotti at the orders of Mussolini, Count Carlo Sforza[14] writes: ". . . The tale of the crimes would fill a book; it is enough to recall, among the most horrible, the attack on Amendola, who was beaten to death at Montecatini in July 1925, and shortly afterwards, at Florence, the treacherous assassination of several brave Florentine opponents, including Pilati, a war cripple, who, stabbed on the bed where he lay sick, murmured: 'The Austrians spared my life: it is the Italians who kill me. . . .' Later, men of the highest intellectual and moral order, such as Rossi, Fancello, Bauer, Vinciguerra and so many others, were condemned to long years of imprisonment; and with them thousands of Italian heroes. . . ."

[12] 24 September 1932.
[13] Mussolini et le fascisme (Plon, Paris 1923, p. 98).
[14] L'Italie telle que je l'ai vue. pp. 152 el seq.

But—of course—it was not peccadilloes of this sort on the part of this hired assassin that might do him disservice with the Vatican. The latter has seen far worse than this. Besides, talking of the horrors of the Holy Inquisition which some people are naive enough to condemn, Father Jean Vieujean,[15] author of La Grande Apologetique, has explicitly said so:

"To accept the principle of the Inquisition, all that is needed is the Christian mentality and that is what many Christians lack. They are more or less free-thinkers and, under the guise of tolerance, they are shocked that an idea should be defended by force. The Church knows no such hesitation."

She has indeed proved it well over the many years during which she dominated Europe by means of her "men of providence". The Liberals, Orthodox Croatians and Jews—in short all those whose mere existence encumbered her—know something about it.

"Mussolini, then, that "wonderful man" (to quote Pius XI before he became Pope), continued to "make rapid headway" without tripping over the corpses, and one of his greatest steps forward—a most important one—was very soon to settle a debt he owed his protector by re-establishing his temporal sovereignty. All this was without prejudice to an endowment of 750 million lire in cash and 1,000 million 5% consolidated stock. The Holy See's friendship is precious, but not free.

Theocracy

After the conclusion of the Lateran Treaty, Father Janvier,[16] famous French preacher, declared:

"Here is a man, remarkable for his power and intelligence, who has shown us a surprising spectacle. He has signed a concordat which recognizes the supremacy of the Church over the State."

The temporal sphere

"God could raise up men (Pius XI and Mussolini) capable of contemplating Him (the Lateran Treaty). That is just what He did. Indeed, one fine morning in February 1929, the entire world learned that a treaty—the Lateran Treaty—had just been signed between

[15]BIoud et Gay, Paris 1937, p. 1316.
[16]Quoted by Albert Bayet.

the Pope and Mussolini, acknowledging the Vicar of God's sovereignty over the territory of the Vatican City and thus restoring his independence vis-a-vis other sovereigns, including the King of Italy. Moreover, a Concordat was annexed to the Treaty, which recognized the juridical personality of the Church. . . .

"Let us listen to what Pius XI has to say", says S. Gillet,[17] General Master of the Dominicans, " We must say that we have been nobly supported. And perhaps it was necessary also for us to have a man (Mussolini) like this one that Providence has led us to meet, a man without the preoccupations of the Liberal School. ... By the Grace of God, We have been able to conclude a Concordat which is certainly among the best ever made; it is with profound satisfaction that We believe We have thereby given God to Italy and Italy to God".

In another connexion, Mgr. Cristiani[18] recalls the essential significance of these agreements:

"It is clear that the constitution of the City of the Vatican was of primary importance in establishing the Papacy's position as a political power. . . ."

It is thus officially established, under the seal of the Imprimatur, that the Papacy considers itself a political power. It needed no less than guarantors of this order to convince us of the reality of the fact, since for almost two thousand years now the Church has ceaselessly and loudly proclaimed that she intends to respect the words of Christ: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's".

To tell the truth, this was never evident in practice, but at least the principle was maintained. It will be seen that this will no longer be so, and that in the eyes of a pontiff enamoured of geopolitics, the divine precept is decidedly outdated.

The Pope takes sides with the dictators

On 30 May 1929, according to Paul Lesourd,[19] Pius XI wrote to Cardinal Gasparri:

[17]La Saintete francaise (Flammarion. Paris 1938, pp. 165 et seq.). Nihil obstat, 8 November 1938, Imprimatur 10 November 1938. (AUTHOR'S NOTE: The Lateran Treaty proclaims Catholicism as the state religion. The term "state religion" means discrimination between Catholics and non-Catholics.)

[18]Le Vatican politique (Les Editions du Centurion, Paris 1957, p. 156) Nihil obstat, 19 April 1956 Imprimatur, 15 June 1956.

"A Catholic state, it is said and repeated, but a Fascist state; We note this without any special difficulty, willingly in fact, for it undoubtedly means that, with regard to ideas and doctrines as well as to practice, the Fascist state will not agree to anything that is not in accordance with Catholic doctrine and practice."

Thus is the collusion between the Church and Fascism established. Nor was it to be expected that the Holy See would place the slightest obstacle in the way of the ambitious aims of the dictator it had brought to power.

The Vatican and the Ethiopian war

Cianfarra[20] tells us that "Pius XI had understood that his attitude of conciliation towards Fascism at the time of the conquest of Ethiopia by Italy had provoked deep resentment among American Catholics. Despite violent opposition on the part of the Anglo-Saxon world to the expansionist aims of Italy, the Sovereign Pontiff had abstained from condemning Mussolini's policy and had left the Italian clergy the widest latitude to co-operate with the Fascist Government. . . . Ecclesiastics, ranging from humble parish priests to cardinals, began to speak in favour of the war.

"One of the most striking examples was offered by the Cardinal-Archbishop of Milan, Alfredo Ildefonso Schuster, who went as far as to call the campaign in question 'a Catholic crusade'. . . . Italy, explained Pius XI, considered that this war was justified by an urgent need for expansion. . . .

"Ten days later, Pius XI expressed the wish that the legitimate claims of a 'great and noble nation', from which, he recalled, he himself had come, should be satisfied. . . .

"This clearly signified that Ethiopia would have to give way to Fascist pressure, since the Pope had implicitly recognized 'the need for Italy to expand in Eastern Africa. . . .' Pius XI was severely criticized not only for not having deplored the defeat of Ethiopia, but also for having himself participated in the joy of a nation which almost the entire universe was blaming for its guilty aggression. . . ."

"Italian troops", writes F. Charles-Roux[21] "had not been a week in Addis-Ababa before Mussolini was asking the Pope to substitute

[19]La Cite de Cisar et Dieu (Flammarion, Paris, p. 28).
[20]La guerre et le Vatican (Le Portulan, Paris 1946, pp. 46 et seq.).
[2i]Huit ans au Vatican (Flammarion, Paris 1947, pp. 38 to 134).

Italians for the French missionaries of Abyssinia. This was acting quickly and precipitating events. Yet Pius XI agreed. . . ."

And F. Charles-Roux concludes, "The Italo-Abyssinian war exerted a direct and profound influence upon several important events in Europe: the reoccupation of the Rhineland, the annexation of Austria, the dismemberment and crushing of Czechoslovakia ____ "

Then, the Vatican did not pride itself on affecting an "anti-colonialist" attitude, at least not to the detriment of its champion Mussolini. The latter could massacre as he wished the people of Ethiopia — Christians though they were — by the most up-to-date means, including poison gas. But, on the other hand, Overseas France was already undermined by the baneful activity of the missions, as we have shown in other works.[22]

Mussolini—Hitler—Franco

Just as it is obvious that the Holy Father favours with his abetting benevolence the "conquests" of Mussolini, so it will be noticed that the foreign policies of the dictators were completely identical.

"At present, most of Italy", writes Antonio Aniante,[23] "is against Paris and for Berlin. Hitler gets his inspiration from Mussolini; the Nazi ideal is nothing but an Italian ideal. . . . Since Mussolini came to power, everyone's sympathy is for Berlin.. . . The entire peninsula is against France.

"The regime has given back to the Italians a primitive and neo-barbarian outlook which can bring with it nothing but war—war against France. . . .

"In 1923, the Fascist regime amalgamated with National Socialism; and it befriended Hitler and supplied him with arms and money... .

"It is a fine thing, in the eyes of the world, for a dictator to walk with a King on his left side and a Pope on his right. .. .

" 'Duce' means 'condottiere'. . . . If the Church and the Crown have on the one hand given prestige to Fascism, they have, on the other, cost thousands of millions—millions paid at that, by the Italians, who are far from being among the richest peoples in the world."

[22]Le Vatican conlre la France (Fischbacher, Paris 1957) and Le Vatican contre la France d'outre-mer, oy Francois Mejan (Fischbacher, Paris 1958).

[23]Mussolini (Grasset. Paris 1932. pp. 123 el seq).

They were to cost this people much more yet.

Let us see how the fate of Hitler's Germany was bound up with that of Vaticano-Fascist Italy:

"The anti-Nazis declare unequivocally", reports Frederic Hirth[24] "that Hitler is on MussolinVs payroll. Enormous cases full of lire, dollars and pounds sterling are supposed to come via Switzerland. One of their chiefs, Voigt, declared at a meeting of racists, 'If it is true that Mussolini does not wish to acknowledge us, why should he continually send us money?' Here is a clear and categorical admission by someone who must know the real truth about the shady side of his party."

Mussolini was obvious cut out for this role of agent between the Vatican and Hitler. The Italian puppet, despite his bluster, could have no really effective influence upon Europe's position. He had to have a dependable colleague. The Holy See was working actively to that end.

The same operation was then carried out in Spain. As Nitti[25] points out:

"General Franco's adventure, which began in mid-July 1936, was prepared in Italy in the spring of the preceding year, and it was Italy that furnished the rebellion with the money and the arms and who had landed in Spain four or five times as many men under the command of army generals as any other country.

"It may be said that, in a few years, Fascism has ruined and destroyed the great work of the democratic governments. . . ."

The Vatican flatters Mussolini, who has reached the zenith of his power

On 26 February 1937, Cardinal Schuster, Archbishop of Milan, speaking at the Milan School of Fascist Mysticism, spoke of "This Benito Mussolini, to whom I say that Jesus Christ, Son of God the Saviour, has granted talents which place him among the great spiritual figures ranging from Augustus to Constantine".

It would be difficult to admire too much the Fascist mysticism, worthy sister of the younger Nazi mysticism. They are both made from the same pattern. Moreover, the extravagant words of the

[24]Hitler on le guerrier dechaine (Editions du Tambourin. Paris 1930, p. 148).
[25]La desagregation de l'Europe (Editions Spes, Paris 1938, pp. 346 to 467).

Archbishop of Milan are echoed in those of Hans Kerll, Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs of the Third Reich, as quoted by Andre Guerber:[26] "Just as Christ gathered together his twelve disciples in a single cohort faithful to the point of martyrdom, so we are witnesses of an identical spectacle. Adolf Hitler is in truth the Holy Spirit."

The Good Friday attack

"On Good Friday (1939)", Cianfarra[27] tells us, "the first squadron of the Italian Navy disembarked thousands of soldiers in the Albanian ports of Santi Quaranta, Valona, Durazzo and San Giovanni di Medua. . . . The Albanians, alas, were entirely without modern weapons. A few heroes tried to oppose the landing at Durazzo, and were very rapidly put out of action. . . King Zog fled to Greece. . . . Mussolini set up a puppet-government which was entirely devoted to his interests. ... A parliament composed of members carefully chosen by the Italians, slavishly rushed to offer the crown of Albania to King Victor Emmanuel, only a few days after the complete occupation of the country. . . . The Italian occupation of Albania had many advantages for the Church. Out of a population of one million Albanians who became Italian subjects, 68% were Moslems, 20% of the Greek Orthodox religion and only 12% Roman Catholics. . . . From a merely political point of view, therefore, the country's annexation by a Catholic Power was certainly going to improve the Church's position there and to please the Vatican...."

Maybe there were a few of the faithful who saw a kind of sacrilege in this unusual way of celebrating the anniversary of the Crucifixion. But the fact remains that the Holy See showed no sign of being shocked by it.

Did the Fascist "mystique" deliberately choose this anniversary, according to some mysterious symbolism, to annex a country peopled mostly with Moslems and Orthodox Christians?

* * *

At that time many books were being published in Europe, over the signature of ecclesiastics or orthodox laymen, which were clearly

[26] Himmler et ses crimes (Les Documents Nuit et Jour, Paris 1946. p. 91).
[27] La guerre et le Vatican, pp. 217 et seq.

intended to prepare public opinion for the merciless struggle that the Roman Catholic Church was about to start, with its champions' weapons, against the liberal democracies of France and England and against Soviet—and more particularly Orthodox—Russia. Of this type of work we give in the chapter on France a particularly significant example which we owe to Canon Coube. But it goes without saying that this prophetic literature—there were good reasons why it was prophetic—was flourishing also under the Fascist eagles of Italy. The following extract from the French translation of a book, to which Mr. Daniel-Rops wrote a preface, conveys perfectly the tone of these calls to a new crusade.

"He who is near the Sword is near to God", writes Iginio Giordani.[28] "The Christian dialectic necessitates a constant fight. Those who are faithful to this principle of combat are easily accused of clerical insolence ... it makes one feel like regretting the times of religious wars. . . . Today, you can do as you please. Discrimination is dead. . . . Nowadays, the real battle is between religion and atheism and it is a veritable war. . . . Catholic intolerance has acquired a supernatural character. . . . The Pope insists on this apotheosis of intolerance. . . . The day of the Crusades is over: we engraved its seal on our weapons, and carved it on our hearts before setting out to exterminate the infidel. But now we must engrave this symbol in the very core of our hearts, and the faithlessness we must destroy is inside us and in our institutions. . . . This modern paradox calls with a voice that is louder than ever the militant Church to arms. . . . This is the crucial hour . ... To make ready for the great duel, of which the premonitory signs are all about us, we must go back to the faith in its entirety. This preparation is apparent in the social order, and it was in its name that Liberalism was fought down. . . . The battle never ceases; it is a giant struggle in which the Church is fighting one of the most historic and formidable battles ever—a battle which enables a comparison to be made between our times and those of the third, eleventh and sixteenth centuries. . . . We have the honour to bear arms in Thy Name, O Christ our King. For Thou art with us, God of War...."

So the Papacy, the great criminal of the 1914-1918 war who went

[28]La Revolution de la Croix (Alsatia, Paris 1938. pp. 6 et seq.). Nihil obstat. 28 September 1938. Imprimatur, 20 October 1938.

unpunished lost no time in preparing her revenge. In this Europe, impoverished, completely bewildered, and bled white by four years of war, the Papacy chose Italy as her field of activity and raised up the first of the dictators destined to play again and at further expense, the match she had just lost. Mussolini was the prototype, and there were to be more of the same kind. First of all came Hitler, then Franco, then the later editions, which were even worse—the Quislings, the Petains, these miserable products of defeat.

CHAPTER II

IT WAS THE POPE WHO MADE HITLER

OBSCURE origins of the future dictator: failure as an artist, poverty and downfall. — First steps of the political agitator: so-called Bavarian separatism, the funds of the Quai d'Orsay. — Catholic Bavaria, the cradle of Hitlerism. To Pius XI's mind, it must supplant Lutheran Prussia. — Mgr. Pacelli, Nuncio at Munich, and Franz von Papen, the Pope's Privy Chamberlain, destroy the Weimar Republic in order to clear the way for Nazism. — Von Papen, the Vatican's man, dismisses the Reichstag and prepares triumphant elections for the Nazis. Hitler as Chancellor. — "The Pope is personally favourable to him". — Mgr. Kaas, President of the Catholic Zentrum, renewing the manoeuvre of don Sturzo in Italy, has special full powers voted to the Chancellor, thus providing him with the basis of his dictatorship. — The Vatican's victory. — Like Mussolini, Hitler is soon paying his debt towards his protector by concluding a concordat that is "most advantageous to the Church". Henceforth the entire German Catholic Episcopate is devoted to him and Catholic youth groups are merged with Nazi youth groups. — "Doctrinal" divagations: close relationship of Nazism and Catholicism. Franz von Papen declares: "Nazism is a Christian reaction against the spirit of 1789".

"Pius XI is certainly the most German of popes that ever sat enthroned on the See of Saint Peter."

Gazette de Cologne
31 May 1927.

"Nazism is a Christian reaction against the spirit of 1789."

FRANZ VON PAPEN,
Privy Chamberlain to the Pope

OPINION is fairly well informed today, through certain works by French or German authors, on the obscure beginnings of the future dictator who was for a moment to eclipse the greatest figures of which Germany was so proud, from Frederick the Great to Bismarck, to end up miserably in the depths of an underground shelter beneath the ruins of his bomb-smashed capital.

First of all, in a recently published book, Walter Gorlitz and Herbert A. Quint,[1] note with what care the Fuhrer tried to cast a veil over his past:

"Hitler categorically forbade all research into the period during which he lived in Vienna. The party immediately undertook to collect all documents concerning his youth, so as to prevent their publication. ... He had been brought up in an atmosphere of Catholic thought; outwardly he always remained Catholic. . . .

"Josef Greiner, author of the book La fin du mythe hitlerien, tells how he made Hitler's acquaintance in September 1907, when he himself had come to Vienna to study painting. The result of the entrance examination brought Hitler squarely face to face with reality: his drawings were not up to standard and he was turned down: he sank into the most dire poverty and remained in that state for years. ... He tried to get work as a manual labourer. He found a job in the building trade . . . was turned off the site . . . had no roof over his head and used to sleep on park benches . . .; then he found shelter in a free doss-house . . . and got his meals at the monastery of the Brothers of Charity. During the winter of 1909-1910, he was occasionally employed in clearing away snow and carrying baggage. The biography of the twentieth century's second dictator, Benito Mussolini, shows a certain similarity to that of

[1]Adolf Hitler (Amiot-Dumont, Paris 1953, tome II, p. 129).

Hitler. There again we see the revolt of the disappointed artist—in the literary field this time—the period of poverty, and imprisonment for begging and vagrancy. . . ."

Mr. Robert Bouchez,[2] former Attache of the French Legation at Munich, gives the following account of the expedients to which Germany's future master was then reduced:

"It is undoubtedly true that he was often able to eat only because of the help he got from He'ita, a prostitute, or from the little French "hostess" Perrette. There was a certain common factor of degradation that seemed to hold these people together. . . ."

Then the young Hitler reached the age of conscription:

"On 5 February 1914", wrote Gorlitz and Quint,[3] "Hitler was declared unfit for service in the armed forces. ... On 3 August 1914, the day when Germany declared war on France, he made a request to King Louis III of Bavaria, and on 4 August he already had a reply telling him to enlist in a Bavarian regiment. ... By the end of October, Hitler was fighting in the ranks of the "List Regiment"; on 2 December 1914 he received a second-class Iron Cross. On the morning of 16 October 1918, he was gassed.

"Corporal Adolf Hitler was discharged from the hospital at Passewalk during the extremely dark and desperate days of November 1918.

"On 10 May 1919, he was transferred to the headquarters company of the 2nd infantry regiment. According to Hitler, his first political mission was to be a member of a committee of enquiry into the events which had taken place in his regiment during the revolution. . . . Then the new commander of the Reichswehr at Munich started a course on "civic thought". Corporal Hitler was detailed to take it...

"In September 1919, Hitler was told to attend a meeting of the Deutsche Arbeiter Partei (German workers' party) D.A.P. . . . That night, he found about twenty-five people of humble extraction gathered in the "Leiber" room of the Sternecker-Brau cafe....

"On 16 September, Hitler joined the D.A.P. ... He was given card No. 7. There, he met a man who was to have a great influence

[2]Hitler que j'ai vu noitre (Jacques Melot, Paris 1945, p. 103), a book dedicated to Mr Robert Murphy, Vice Consul of the United States at Munich in 1922.
[3]Op. cit., tome I, pp. 27 et seq.

on him. This was Dietrich Eckart, who became his, so to say, tutor ... and introduced him to Alfred Rosenberg.... One wonders whether Hitler was not already acquainted with the Deutsche Arbeiter Partei as well as the book by Rudolf Jung, Der Nationale Sozialismus (National Socialism), published in 1911-1912. The fact that he does not mention the subject in Mein Kampf is, of course, no proof, because the point of writing the book was to set himself up as the sole progenitor of National Socialism."

"In 1921", writes Georges Rul,[4] "Hitler joined the Roehm's Free Corps. A year later he became Chief of Propaganda."

Even so, the adventurer was still a starveling, and was ready to work for anyone who would pay him. Indeed, Walter Gorlitz[5] tells us that in the opinion of Chancellor Bruning: ". . . it was foreign funds which gave the greatest help in promoting the rise of Hitler and his party between 1920 and 1923."

Robert Bouchez[6] also writes:

"In 1922, he would from time to time even borrow a few marks from Goering. One day when he had come down to this, Captain Jungmann told me that if he had the choice, Hitler would rather appeal to France than to the Hohenzollerns."

Georges Rul[7] confirms that Hitler was, at one time, in the pay of France.

"Hitler is interested in southern Germany (Bavaria). He says there is a separatist movement in Bavaria. On this ground, Mr. Emile Dard, French Minister at Munich, subsidized Hitler from the secret funds of the Quai d'Orsay in 1923."

"Morel, a Member of the British Parliament, said in the House that in 1922 the Quai d'Orsay had paid Hitler 200,000 fr.[8] The French Foreign Ministry did not deny this."

Moreover, no one was better informed about the uncertain and precarious situation of Hitler in 1922 and 1923 than Robert Bouchez,[9] Attache of the French J egation in Munich:

"1922. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has appointed me Attache to the Foreign Legation in Munich. My duties are those of Vice-

[4]Le 4e Reich (Editions Perface, Paris 1946, p. 43).
[5]Op. cit., p. 118.
[6]Hitler que j'ai vu naitre, pp. 97 and 98.
[7]Le 4e Reich, p. 43.
[8]Constantin-Weyer, op. cit., p. 105.
[9]Hitler que j'ai vu naitre. pp. 44 et seq.

Consul.... I saw the birth of the Nazi movement under the flag of piracy, which by the way was pretty quickly got rid of, leaving only the swastika. Later, only the SS was to use that macabre flag again....

"One winter afternoon, Max, my office boy, had just shown in Mgr. Pacelli, the present Pius XII, at the time Nuncio at Munich... Then, after the cardinal in his quiet black clothes, came a Rhinelander. ... He said that he was a former Feldwebel, at present out of work, and in dire straits, and that he was thinking of joining the French Foreign Legion. He gave me to understand that there was a fellow who was worrying him with nationalistic ideas and that if he should worry us, the French, too, he could take care of things. For 10,000 marks he would settle everything. ... It is a hundred to one that if I had taken out my wallet and given him 2,000 marks as a down payment and asked him to come back for the rest when the job was done, no one would ever have heard of Adolf Hitler."

This near-encounter of the future Pope with the future Fiihrer is very odd. Indeed, in the light of subsequent events, it seems premonitory.

"Mgr. Pacelli", le marquis d'Ormesson tells us, "was extremely popular, and his personal prestige was tremendous." Soon after the war, his popularity and prestige were to facilitate, first in Bavaria, and later in Prussia, his work for the Concordat. . . . Mgr. Pacelli was heard at the Catholic Congress of Fulda, in 1926, to recall the gratitude that Germany owed the Papacy (Pacelli, Gesammelte Reden, pp. 59 to 62). Georges Goyau[10] reports that he pointed out to his listeners from over the Rhine how well Pius XI knew their language: "Just as in the days of Adrian VI", he told them, "a Pope has spoken to the German pilgrims in their own tongue...."

The fact was that Bavaria was then, more than ever, the object of the Vatican's very special attention, as Maurice Laporte[11] has very aptly noted:

Catholic Bavaria, cradle of Hitlerism

"Having travelled from one end of Germany to the other, I came to Munich, capital of Catholic Bavaria where northern Germans

[10]Pie XII (Plon, Paris 1939, pp. 26, 32 and 33).
[11]Sous le casque d'acier (Alexis Redier, Paris 1931, pp. 105 et seq.).

are looked upon as foreigners. . . .

"Since 1918, the rural population of Bavaria has considerably increased. . . . One can well imagine how very tenderly the Vatican cherishes this Bavaria, where Hitler's National Socialism recruits its strongest contingents. Another grievance that Munich has against Berlin is that she overthrew the dynasty and set up the Republic. Bavaria is as monarchist as she is Catholic.

"Bavaria ... is full of quiet strength now that the Stahlhelm encircles her and imposes its discipline upon her. The Stahlhelm has gathered together 200,000 Bavarians, equipped with new uniforms and weapons which every man keeps under his hand so as to be ready for any eventuality. . . .

"The Bavarians plan to build at Munich, with their own money, a Palace of National Socialism. . . . The Bavarians will always go along with any party that will help them to strangle the Republic of Berlin. . . .

"Hitler has found himself a new vocation that will fill his entire life—to beat down France. From hamlet to hamlet, from town to town he goes lecturing—running down the French and insulting the Jews. His language is coarse to the point of brutality—that of a man on whom civilization has laid only the thinnest veneer of culture. . . .

This condottiere, like his comrade and model Mussolini, was naturally viewed with favour in the Vatican, where he was seen as a new man who might restore to its old glory the Germanic Holy Roman Empire. Naturally, it put all its power behind this movement, which, as we shall see, starling in Munich, was to reunite "the Germanies".

As Joseph Rovan[12] writes:

"The Catholic leaders of Bavaria founded the Bayerische Volkspartei (the Bavarian People's Party, BVP), which was designed to have a separate existence. . . . The chiefs of the BVP were to support the right-wing agitators, the professional conspirators of the Bunde (societies), the black Reichswehr, and the ultra-nationalists of the Volkisch movements. Its slogan "Bavaria for the Bavarians!" enabled the Nazis quietly to prepare . . . their vengeful anti-Semitic and in the end ultra-unitarian programme. . . . Catholic Bavaria

[12] Le catholicisme politique en Allemagne. pp. 186 and 195.

will now welcome and protect all troublemakers, all the society members, all the assassins of the Vehmgericht."

Gonzague de Reynold[13] testifies to the way in which the Germans of Roman obedience came to supplant the Protestant majority:

"National Socialism set upon Prussia, and destroyed it. . . . The Nazi regime represents a return to power of southern Germany. The names and background of its chiefs show quite clearly that Hitler is Austrian, Goering is Bavarian, Goebbels a Rhinelander, and so on. National Socialism has created an army altogether different from the Prussian or Prussianized army."

It is impossible to over-emphasize the importance of the presence of the extremely busy Mgr. Pacelli, the future Pius XII, in Munich during these years when the Nazi party was learning to walk. Besides, a keen and accurate observer, F. Charles-Roux[14] has rightly said: "Never in this age has there been a time when the Catholics have played a more important role in world politics than during the ministry of Cardinal Pacelli".

* * *

The Vatican's support constitutes the decisive factor in Hitler's lightning rise, and it may be said that National Socialism was created by the Papacy. To convince oneself of this fact it is only necessary to read the documents and testimonies that follow. . . . They are of the first importance for the understanding of contemporary events. They show how the concerted efforts of Franz von Papen, the Pope's Privy Chamberlain, and Mgr. Pacelli, Nuncio at Berlin, overcame every obstacle that was still confronting the "man of Providence".

The Vatican does not conceal its satisfaction

As Maurice Laporte[15] writes: "The Catholic position: the racial programme! . . . Hitler raised anti-Semitism to the status of a dogma.

"Pius XI, receiving a delegation of German Catholic youth, after the Reichstag elections, is said to have declared: 'Blessed be this

[13] D'ou vient l'Allemagne (Plon, Paris 1939. pp. 185 et seq.).
[14] Huit ans au Vatican, p. 93.
[15] Sous le casque d'acier, pp. 125 et seq.

youth which renews itself in a Germany that also is renewing itself."

"Yes, indeed! This remark, made to young Catholics, was made on the morrow of Hitler's victory. . . . 'Our feelings, including our anti-Semitism, are therefore fully compatible with Christian beliefs!' declared Hitler on 6 September, at Koenigsberg."

These feelings, in themselves very unchristian, were especially compatible with a certain "apostolic" will to crush, and indeed to exterminate, the "heretics" and the Jews, as well as all liberals. This was to be demonstrated in the concentration camps for internal use, and later in the great slaughter-houses of Auschwitz, Dachau and elsewhere.

"No-one must be surprised, after this, if Hitler's heresies on the predestination of the German race to rule the world, presented as having the approval of the Pope and the German Episcopate, should have carried away the entire German youth. . . ." Maurice Laporte[16] continues, "The Father of Christianity, the Nazis used to say, will surely recognize in the National Socialists the true, the only defenders of the Christian faith. German women, by voting for List No. 9, by making your sons and husbands vote for Hitler, you will be voting above all for the greatest Germany, ever-religious and free!

"Hitlerist racism, strong and victorious, is on its way to power."

Mgr. Pacelli's plan: To destroy the Weimar Republic

". . . The immediate problem to Mgr. Pacelli's mind is this", writes Nazareno Padellaro,[17] "The Weimar Constitution introduces afresh the principle of the separation of the Church from the State. How can it be rendered ineffectual? ... A new task awaits the Nuncio in the capital of the Reich, but he has no intention of abandoning the work which he began at Munich, in order to perform it...

"The nuncial residence at Berlin, according to the National Socialist writer Harder . . . rapidly became a centre of political and diplomatic life. All Berlin came to consider the nunciature as the Court of Catholic thinking. . . . In every one of his speeches, the Nuncio insistently returns to the necessity of a close union with Rome. ..."

[16]Op. cit., p. 164.
[17]Pie XII (Julliard, Paris 1950. pp. 120 ct seq.).

This close union of German with the Papacy—so close that it continued even after defeat—is to be the goal of Privy Chamberlain Franz von Papen:

"On 20 July 1932, von Papen intervened in Prussia where the old government, which was doing its utmost to delay the formation of a National Socialist government, was still in power. He proclaimed martial law in Berlin and the Province of Brandenburg and sent a detachment of infantry to throw the Ministers out of their offices. . . .

"The people at the head of the old regime gave way with no other opposition than the lodging before the Supreme Court of Justice of a complaint for violation of the Constitution. . . ."

According to Walter Gorlitz and Herbert A. Quint,[18] "The National Socialist press reported rumours of the conclusion of an alliance between von Papen and Hitler. ... With the approval of Hitler, Goering and Strasser started conversations with Mgr. Kaas. chief of the Catholic Centre party. . . . Von Papen was ready to create a post of Vice-Chancellor for Hitler. ..."

This brings us to the decisive period. The German Catholics were obliged to abandon all resistance to National Socialism, because of the support it had been given by the Papacy. All that remained to be done, was to win them over completely to Hitler's cause, through Mgr. Kaas, their chief. This was soon done.

The alliance between von Papen and Hitler

Paul Winkler[19] is categorical: ". . . Von Papen dismissed th Reichstag and, in agreement with Hitler, organized new elections which had to result in a Nazi victory. The alliance between vo Papen and Hitler seemed unshakable. On 20 July 1932. von Fape dismissed the Socialist Government of Prussia. . . .

"Hitler came into power thanks only to the intrigues of von Papen."

Pius XI and Hitler

"The ecclesiastical hierarchy", said the Mercure de France,[20] "has always observed the principle of 'politics first', and the German

[18]Adolf Hitler (Amiot-Dumont, Paris 1953, vol. II. pp. 29 et seq.)
[19]Allemagne secrete (Hachette, Paris 1946, pp. 177 and seq. 193)
[20]Pie XI et Hitler (15 Januarv 1934. pp. 257 et seq).

Catholics were therefore fully in line with tradition in constituting the Centre party (Das Zentrum), as well as the Bavarian People's Party. . . . With a religious majority, and closely knit politically, they could assert themselves in Parliament by shifting its centre of gravity.

"Hence, with the methodical spirit which characterizes the German, the Catholics organized themselves into a political party first of all in order to subsist and to develop as a Church. It was the personnel of the ecclesiastical administration that served as political personnel.

"Rome looked with an approving eye on this politico-religious activity, for it provided the Holy See with the means of influencing an essentially Protestant government; the skill with which a certain Leo XIII used it is well known. In the end, the Catholic circles in Rome conceived an exaggerated admiration of the way in which the German Church was organized, and held it up as an example to the Catholics of other countries.

"All was not perfect with the Germans—far from it, indeed—and some of their bishops were worried by the fact. To have an idea of the situation it was sufficient to attend a few of their big demonstrations, especially their annual Katholikentag. . . .

"On 31 December 1930, Cardinal Bertram, Archbishop of Breslau and Primate of Germany, declared: 'We, Christians and Catholics, do not recognize racial religion...."

"In the spring of 1932, some uncertainty was noticeable among German Catholic leaders: they had been informed that the 'Pope was personally favourable to Hitler'.

"That Pius XI should feel drawn to Hitler, should not be a matter for surprise. . . . In his opinion, Europe can regain her equilibrium only through German hegemony. In Poland, where under Benedict XV he had been sent on mission by Cardinal Gasparri, he supported German interests. . . .

"The Pope's liking for the Fuhrer is understandable. The Vatican, because of the Anschluss, had for some time been thinking of changing the centre of gravity of the Reich: the Jesuits were openly working towards that end, especially in Austria. Now everyone knows just how much Pius XI counted upon her for the triumph of what he calls 'his policy'. What he wanted to prevent was the hegemony of a

Protestant Prussia and, depending on the Reich to dominate Europe—which would ward off the danger of German federalism—he was seeking a way of building up a Reich in which the Catholics would be masters....

"Even in March 1933, when they met at Fulda, the German bishops took advantage of Hitler's speech at Potsdam to declare that it was necessary to 'recognize that the highest representative of the Reich Government, who is at the same time the authoritative head of the National Socialist movement, has made solemn public declarations which take account of the inviolability of Catholic doctrine, as well as of the work and immutable rights of the Church, and which, on behalf of the Reich Government, formally declare that treaties concluded between the German countries and the Catholic Church shall remain fully and entirely valid.. . .'

"Von Papen leaves for Rome to sign a concordat with the Pope. . . . He also will have to conform in every respect to Mussolini's ideas. The strategy which enabled the latter to achieve the Lateran Treaty and the Concordat has been summed up as follows by an eminent Roman prelate:

"It has even been said that the Concordat concluded between Chancellor Hitler and the Pope had assured the Catholic Church a privileged position in Germany. . . . But—and this is what is most serious for the future of Catholicism in Germany—consciences are deeply disturbed. How, indeed, is one to explain the adherence of the entire ecclesiastic hierarchy to Hitlerism, which a few months ago was so solemnly condemned?..."

The Ultramontanists raise Hitler to power

Joseph Rovan[21] penetratingly analyses the task pursued by von Papen:

"To be sure, throughout these fourteen years (1919-1933) the Zentrum will be the axis of all parliamentary majorities possible. But this uninterrupted presence in the government will not succeed in saving the Republic, nor is it a proof of the democratic nature of the policy of the great Catholic party. . . .

"The Catholic 'integralism' of the first two decades of the twentieth

[21]Le catholicisme politique en Allemagne. pp. 177 et seq., 212 el seq.

century, at once theological, political and social, appears as a general movement of distrust of the modern world. The 'integralist' sets himself the ideal of keeping as completely as possible to the letter of acts and decisions issued by the Pontifical Power, and of being absolutely intransigent in the face of the 'liberal heresies'; in the political field he is readily conservative, not to say reactionary, he rejects democracy and extols the principle of authority. The adversaries of universal franchise were recruited from among the same 'integralist' circles which at that time had attempted to disrupt the unity of interdenominational Christian trade-unionism, while keeping the Zentrum a strictly denominational party, closely subjected to the directives of the hierarchy.

"Franz von Papen thought of dictatorship. In order the better to prepare for it and to complete the break-up of the Republic, he forcibly suppressed the democratic government of Prussia.... So the Prussian police, the last armed body in the service of democracy, passed into the hands of the apprentice dictator. . . . Thanks to von Papen, member of the Zentrum since 1920 and owner of the party's official paper, Germania, Hitler came into power on 30 January 1933.

"German political Catholicism {the Zentrum), instead of becoming Christian democracy, will inevitably be led on 26 March 1933 to vote full powers to Hitler. . . . For the voting of full powers a two-thirds majority was necessary and the votes of the Zentrum represented an indispensable contribution. . . . The Republic was dead. . . .

"The members of the Zentrum and of the Bavarian People's Party had passed the law on full powers....

"In the correspondence and declarations of the ecclesiastic dignitaries under the Nazi regime, we shall see again and again the Jervent support of the bishops.... The Nazi programme ... appeared to many German Catholics as nearer to their fundamental position than liberal democracy . . . the massive support of the Catholic people to Hitler's "National Uprising" . . . the attempts at compromise which were already being made in the spring of 1933 by eminent members of the hierarchy and the suppression of the very recent excommunication against Party members . . . throw a harsh and cruel light upon the ambiguous character of relations between German Catholicism and democracy, both as a political system and as an idea. . . . The democratic ideal made few hearts beat

faster. . . . The attraction of an authoritative system, of a strong power, the spirit of the Syllabus interpreted in a way that was almost official yet solicited remained fully alive. A Christianity for which the spirit of the crusades was still an ideal after three years of Nazi dictatorship could obviously not understand the essential link which makes democracy depend for its life on civilian society."

Catholics and Christian Socialists vote for Hitler's dictatorship

"On the evening of 30 January 1933, the day when the cabinet was constituted", writes von Papen,[22] "I was standing behind Hitler, on the balcony of the new chancellery. We were watching an endless procession, hundreds of thousands of men who, torch in hand, were marching past Hindenburg and the Fuhrer. Hitler's face was ecstatic, and when he turned to speak to me, there was a sob in his voice. 'What a tremendous task we have set ourselves, Herr von Papen! . . .' I was happy to be able to concur. . . .

'You are an old soldier, Herr von Papen', he said to me; 'so you know that one has always to march with the largest and strongest batallions. If you and I march together, we are assured of a majority and, consequently, of success'.

"The governmental statement drawn up by Hitler and myself specifically acknowledged the great conservative principles. . . . Hitler particularly insisted upon the necessity of obtaining special (full) powers. . . .

"After Chancellor Hitler's statement, Mgr. Kaas, Chief of the Catholic Party, Ritter von Lex (Bavarian Catholic Party), Messrs. Maier (State Party) and Smiptendoerfer (Christian Socialists) announced that their respective groups would vote for the law of full powers to Hitler. After a speech by President Goering, this law was voted. . . . It constituted the sole basis of Hitler's dictatorship. . . . The fact that all parties except the Socialists voted for full powers had a far more decisive effect than the Nazi victory in the elections. . .."

The victory of the Vatican

"Hitler Chancellor! So ran the headlines of the German newspapers the day after the 30 January 1933", writes Robert d'Har-

[22]Memoires (Flammarion, P»ris 1953, pp. 195 et seq.).



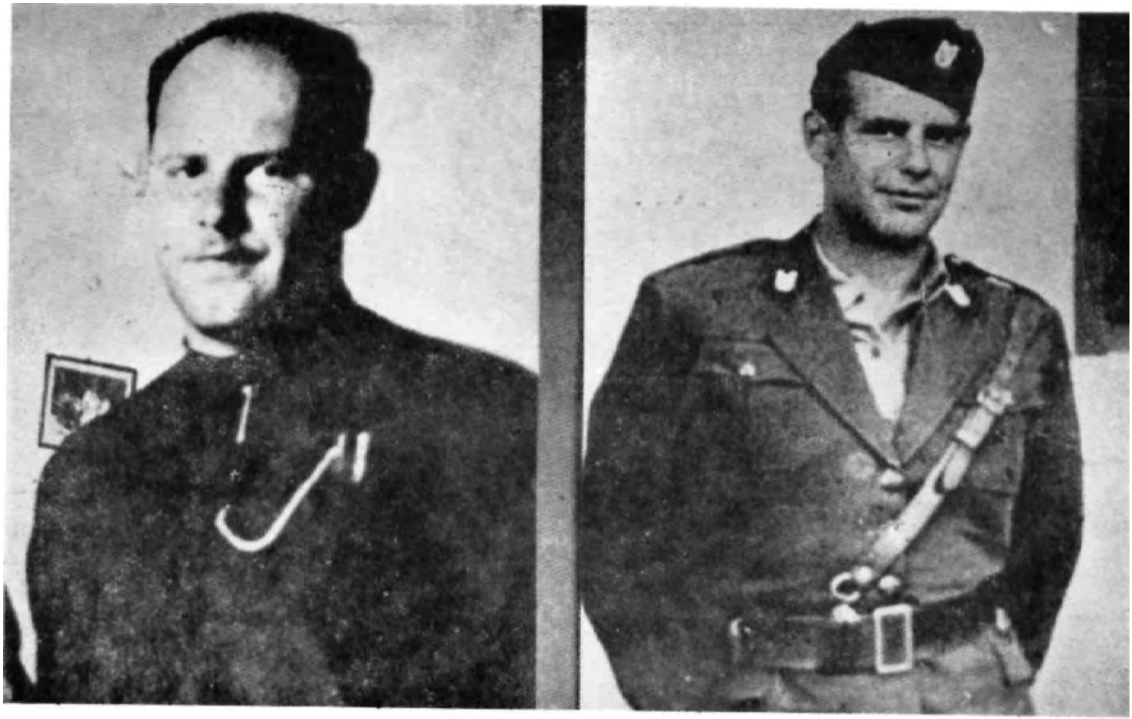
Roman Catholic clergy blessing Nazi emblems



Bruxelles. Le capitaine Léon Degrelle salue les légionnaires.



Mgr. Tiso, Head of the Slovak State, as Hitler's guest



The Franciscan Brother Filipovitch, in his cassock—and in his Ustashi uniform, as Chief of the Jasenovac Concentration Camp

court.[23] "That day will always be the red-letter day of National Socialism, and one of the most important dates in the history of Germany. . . . Von Papen was the true victor of 30 January. Not only did he put Hitler in the saddle by bringing pressure to bear upon old Hindenburg and should therefore logically have some control over him, but also he held in his hands the most effective instruments of power: he was simultaneously Vice-Chancellor and Imperial Commissioner for Prussia and, in the latter capacity, the hierarchial superior of Goering. who had been appointed Minister of Interior for Prussia."

But Franz von Papen, as we have seen, was the alter ego of Mgr. Pacelli, Apostolic Nuncio—that is to say, the "secular arm" of Pius XI.

Pius XI made Hitler

The 'Mercure de France'[24] of 15 January 1934 showed—and nobody contradicted it—that it was Pius XI who had "made" Hitler, for the latter, had the Zentrum not been broken up by the Pope, could not have come into power—or at least not by legal means. . . .

"By not leaving the German Zentrum enough time to re-form", writes this review, "Pius XI deliberately shattered the obstacle in Hitlers path—an obstacle which the latter could not have surmounted. . . . Does the Vatican consider it made a political error in thus clearing the way to power for Hitler? It would seem not. . . .

"How does the Church reconcile this policy with its doctrine? Hitlerism was condemned and remained condemned, but—as we have said—the Vatican distinguishes between Hitler's doctrine and the person of the Fuhrer. . . ."

It should be added that by virtue of this truly subtle distinguo worthy of Escobar, the bishops in Germany and, later, in Austria were able to flatter as they wished "the person of the Fiihrer" and to advise their flock to submit completely to his orders, however monstrous they might be.

To those who still believe in Hitler's anti-Christianity we suggest that they read the following words:

[23]Catholiques d'Allemagne (Plon, Paris 1938, pp. 75 et seq.).
[24]L'Autriche catholique et Hitler (1st May 1938, pp. 719 et seq.).

Gorlitz and Quint[25] recall that "After the electoral victory, the 'National Government' inaugurated its activities with an official ceremony at the garrison church of Potsdam (12 March 1933)—an idea conceived by Hitler, who wanted to demonstrate by it the merging, as it were, of tradition and revolution. The Reichswehr and the police participated with units which had taken part in the national revolution: the SA, the SS and the Stahlhelm. The notabilities of the conservative elements in Germany: the Crown Prince, Marshal von Mackensen, Prussian princes and many former generals were invited. . . . The meeting ended with a prayer of thanksgiving....

"On 1 May 1933, Hitler spoke . . . assuming a voice of almost religious gravity in exhorting the masses to fight together in order to be able to say at the supreme hour of their appearance before God: 'As you see, O Lord! we have changed. The German people is no longer a people of dishonour, of shame, of faithlessness. No Lord, the German people is again strong in the spirit of sacrifice. O Lord! We do not stray from Thee! Bless us in the battle we are fighting for our liberty and therefore for our race'.. .."

The Concordat which was soon to be signed was particularly advantageous for the Roman Catholic Church, as Pius XI was to stress with satisfaction; since it had been ready for a long time, it was soon signed. In fact, it merely ratified the deep understanding between conquering Germanism and papal imperialism—that politico-religious collusion which tended to give to Berlin the control of temporal matters in Europe, and to the Vatican the control of the spiritual sphere, and which was later to be so strikingly confirmed by events.

The Concordat with Hitler

Now, let us see what Joseph Rovan[26] has to say. "The Imperial Concordat negotiated by Franz von Papen after Hitler's accession, fulfilled one of the dearest wishes of the German Catholics, one of the aims towards which the Holy See's policy had been directed for a hundred years. . . . The Pontifical Nuncio at Munich (Mgr. Pacelli) who, though accredited to the Bavarian Government, was in fact

[25] Adolf Hitler, tome II, pp. 54 and 59.
[26] Le catholicisme politique en Allemagne (Editions du Seuil, Paris 1956, p. 230 et seq.).

representing the Holy See in Germany as a whole, had undertaken a long-term task which after fifteen years ended in the Imperial Concordat. . . . Throughout this period he was negotiating at the Reich level and was preparing individual concordats. On more than one occasion ... the Reich Government, presided over by militant Catholics, joined him in the preparation of a general concordat, but internal resistance from Socialist and Liberal quarters, as well as the federalist interest of the Bavarian and Prussian Governments, put a stop to these attempts every time. . . .

"The Concordat gave the National Socialist Party, which practically everybody thought of as a usurper government, ij not indeed as a band of brigands, the prestige of an agreement with the most ancient of international powers. It was rather like an international certificate of respectability. . . .

"The Concordat agreed that the State should have the right of veto over episcopal nominations; moreover, the bishops had to swear allegiance to the Fuhrer.

"Right until the end of the war the Nazi state continued to pay most of its financial contributions that, under the Concordats, it had agreed to pay to the Church. ... It will be seen later that after 1945, the governmental party, C.D.U. (Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's Christian Democrat Party), confirmed in no uncertain fashion the validity of the Concordat concluded by Hitler."

Now let us see how Franz von Papen[27] stresses the importance of the Concordat which he signed in Hitler's name:

"The unremitting battle for religious freedom that the Catholic Zentrum was fighting had the active support of the first Apostolic Nuncio in Germany, Mgr. Eugenio Pacelli, who is now Pius XII. No doubt it is centuries since a sovereign pontiff knew Germany and the Germans as well as does His Holiness. At first his task was a delicate one: indeed, he was accused of wishing to convert Prussia, an essentially Protestant country. . . . During the time when he was in Berlin, I had the honour from time to time of inviting him to my home, together with a few prominent conservatives and some figures who were eminent in the world of German Catholicism. . . .

"Not since the faraway days of the Reformation, had a Concordat been concluded between the Vatican and the Reich. . . .

[21]Memoires (Flammarion. Paris 1953. pp. 89, 90. 203 and 207).

"The new situation in Germany seemed to offer an opportunity to resume the interrupted conversations. . . . Mussolini, who had resolved the problem of relations with the Vatican with the Lateran Treaties, insisted when he spoke to me upon the necessity of acting as soon as possible. 'The signature of this convention with the Vatican will for the first time establish the credit of your Government in the eyes of foreigners', he asserted. At my request, he told his ambassador in Berlin to stress the urgency of the Concordat. . . . Chancellor Hitler asked me to assure the Papal Secretary of State (Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli) that he would immediately muzzle the anti-clerical clan. ... On 20 July, the treaty was signed at the papal secretariat....

"The problem of confessional schools seemed now to be solved once and for all, and the general terms of the concordat were more favourable than those of any such convention that had up to then been signed by the Vatican. . . ."

* * *

The Nazi regime, like the Fascist regime, was therefore "harmoniously reconciled" with the Church. But when one knows the latter's primordial role in the Fiihrer's accession to power, one might very well say that the harmony was established in advance.

The following document[28] is a striking illustration—even while it tries to excuse it—of the monstrous character of this agreement between two essentially opposite doctrines—Catholicism and Nazism. To be able to find agreement between the universality of the first and the brutal racism of the latter, is to have recourse to acrobatics, contortions and distortions of thought and the abuse of words characterizing this fine piece of casuistry which we owe to Michaele Schmaus, Professor in the Faculty of Theology of Munich. Incidentally, it should be noted that this apologist for Nazism has since been raised by Pius XII to the rank of Prince of the Church, and that La Croix (2 September 1954) calls him the "great theologian of Munich". Fascism is therefore inextricably involved with the political system and the hierarchical organization of the totalitarian,

[28]Begegnungen zwischen Katholischem Christentum und national-sozialistischer Weltanschauung (Aschendorf. Munster 1933).

absolutist and intolerant Papacy. Furthermore, the Papacy, by its numerous promotions of German ecclesiastics and by its many concessions of this nature made after Hitler's defeat, has shown quite clearly that it has no intention of disowning the defeated dictator.

The Roman Church, the wet-nurse of Nazism

" 'Empire et Eglise' is a series of writings which was used in the building up of the Third Reich by the joint forces of the National Socialist State and Catholic Christianity. This collection is based on the conviction that there is no fundamental contradiction between today's national renaissance in the natural order of things and the supernatural life of the Church. Quite the contrary, the restoration of the political system seems to have its natural result in being achieved by the strength it draws from the deepest religious faith.

"'Entirely German and entirely Catholic, this is the way in which these writings seek to examine and encourage the relationship and co-operation between the Catholic Church and National Socialism and so point the way to a fruitful collaboration, such as is already to be seen in the basic fact that they have made a Concordat....

"The National Socialist movement is the most vigorous and the most massive reaction against the spirit of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. . . .

"National Socialism has as the very centre of its conception of the world the idea of a people made of blood and earth, of destiny and mission. . . . A consequence of love for the people is an entirely justified concern about purity of blood, the basis of a nation's spiritual make-up. . . . Consequently, it is natural to wonder whether the Catholic vision of the world and man, and National Socialist thought and purpose are able to join forces on common ground. Every Catholic who follows the instructions of the German bishops must be in general agreement with this proposition. . . .

"Between the Catholic faith and liberal thought no compromise is possible. There is an irreconcilable enmity between Liberalism and Catholicism, even if, for political Catholicism, the realization of Catholic ideas should sometimes be unattainable owing to the ups and downs of day-to-day tactics. . . . There is nothing more opposed to Catholicism than the concept of the democratic man.

"Since the will of God runs through the whole of history, we may read in this history, without fear of error, the fact that God wished to entrust the German people with one of His highest missions. . . .

"The reawakened idea of strict authority leads us once again to a new understanding of ecclesiastical authority. The mistrust of liberty is founded on the Catholic doctrine of original sin . . . the laws of National Socialism and of Catholic authority point in the same direction . . . hence the faithful Catholic will find a bridge to the spring of life of the Nazis. . . ."

Adler und Kreuz

"The essentially vulnerable point of all the episcopal declarations which followed the triumphant Nazi elections of 5 March 1933, is to be found in the first official document of the Church, which was signed by all German bishops, i.e., the pastoral letter of 3 June 1933. This begins on an optimistic note and a declaration of joy which are reported by Robert d'Harcourt[29] of the Academie francaise:

"The men at the head of the new state have, to our great joy, categorically asserted that they base both their work and themselves on Christian grounds. A declaration of solemn frankness which deserves the sincere gratitude of all Catholics. . . ."

A portrait of the Privy Chamberlain

In her book 'The Embassy Looks On', Martha Dodd,[30] daughter of William-E. Dodd, who was United States Ambassador in Germany during Hitler's time, writes of the bloody day of 30 June 1934:

"Von Schleicher has just been killed. ... He had been Prime Minister for only a short time and was betrayed, it was said, by his friend Franz von Papen. . . A mortal enemy of the Nazis, he was feared by them for his brilliant qualities and his liberal politics which, if he had had the ambition, could one day have enabled him to catch up with Hitler. . . .

"My father had no liking at all for Franz von Papen, for he remembered only too well his cowardice, his spying, his treachery and his perjury. . . ."

[29]Catholiques d'Allemagne (Plon, Paris 1938. p. 108)
[30](Aubier, Editions Montaigne. Paris 1940. pp. 103 et seq)

Von Papen (a predestined name), Eminence grise of the Vatican, was to continue this crooked work for a long time to come, and finally, at Nuremberg, to escape "miraculously", so to say, from the punishment meted out to the war criminals.

Pierre Laval at the Vatican

Francois Charles-Roux[31] tells us that "In January 1935 our Foreign Minister, Pierre Laval, went to Rome. Strange as it may seem, this was the first official visit to be paid by a French Foreign Minister to the Vatican—the very first in the whole of French history. The conversation (between Pius XI and Laval) began easily with a discussion about the negotiations that Laval was conducting with Mussolini, and about the agreement which was to be signed the same evening, an agreement upon which the Holy See looked with a very favourable eye. . . .

"On the evening of 7 January, . . . Mussolini, . . . turning to Laval, asked him:

'Have you seen the Osservatore Romano?'

'No.'

"'Well, it is shouting Hosannah.'

"It was true: that evening's edition of the Holy See's paper contained a dithyrambic article . . . relating the Pope's audience to the Minister, and the latter's visit to Cardinal Pacelli. . . .

In fact, under the cover of a few colonial conventions: a statute concerning the Italians in Tunisia and territorial concessions granted by France to Italy in southern Libya and Somaliland, the future head of the Vichy Government appears to have secretly pledged his personal assistance to the Papacy in a number of schemes, beginning with the annexation of Ethiopia by Fascist Italy (3 October 1935). But, on the other hand, the enthusiastic welcome given to Pierre Laval by the Holy Father did not change his attitude towards the Saar plebiscite, which took place a few days later, on 13 January 1935, as Robert d'Harcourt[32] reports:

"On the very eve of the poll, the Catholic deans of the Saar, following the initiative of their hierarchical chiefs of Trier and

[31]Huit ans au Vatican, pp. 188, 190, 198 and 203.
[32]Catholiques d'Allemagne. pp. 186 et seq.

Speyer, made a united declaration in favour of the union. Berlin had won. Mgr. Hudal, the German rector of the 'Anima' at Rome, had the nerve to go a good deal further and spoke of the increased confidence that was due to the Government of the Third Reich."

The Pope's "missus dominicus"

Bernard Lavergne[33] tells us that "... The great spiritual home of this entire Catholic Rhineland is a Benedictine monastery, which is very well known in Germany but almost unknown in France, the monastery of Maria Laach in the Eifel near Mayen, 30 km to the west of Coblenz. . . . They pride themselves on having preserved intact the anti-liberal, counter-revolutionary, pangermanistic and ultramontane spirit, as befits good German monks.

"This monastery's exceptional influence over the entire Catholic world beyond the Rhine comes of its having been for many a long year the principal spokesman used by the Papacy to acquaint the German bishops with its directives. This monastery was also behind the creation of the Catholic party, the Zentrum, set up during the reign of William II. The Emperor would sometimes visit this monastery to see its superior, a true "missus dominicus" of the Pope. Hitler often sent his "alter ego' there: the celebrated Herr Goebbels. ...

"Vis-a-vis German politicians the doctrine of Maria Laach is tantamount to saying that beyond the Rhine Catholicism must be integrated, that is, closely associated with German political power in order that the German State may take full advantage of the considerable political support that the Papacy is able to offer—a no doubt skilful policy, but one which is the very essence of clericalism.

"That is certainly what is happening, for, ever since the tradition of having only Italian popes has been established, and that Italy has lived in ever greater economic and political symbiosis with Germany, the Holy See's diplomatic activity has always shown a marked predilection for German political theories. This predilection of the Holy See for Germany, which, far from diminishing, has recently become more marked, is in part the direct work of the monks of Maria Laach. . . .

[33]Le projet de Communaute politique de la Petite Europe ou la France livree aux ambitions pantermanistes (Annie politique et economique. Presses Universitaires de France, June-August 1953, pp. 289 et seq.).

"Dom Ildefonso Herwegen, abbot of the monastery in Hitler's day, had a very complaisant attitude to the Nazi regime. Moreover, at that time, the prior of Maria Laach was a Prussian reserve officer...."

Now for a few more extracts from a work by a German author. Gunther Buxbaum,[34] who brings out very well the Catholic "hierarchy" 's enthusiastic adherence to this National Socialist movement, which was condemned by the Papacy in theory, but not in practice.

Here the Holy See's downright hypocrisy is shown in a very strong light.

Under the sign of the cross

"This is the first collective pastoral letter after Hitler's accession to power. It is dated 3 June 1933. In it. the German Episcopate . . . proclaims its 'pride' and 'joy' at 'being German', and continues to declare its readiness to make 'the greatest sacrifices for the people and the nation'.

"Similarly, the pastoral letter of August 1936 and that of Christmas of the same year calls upon . . . 'German unity'. It ends with a wish that speaks of a marked 'loyalty':

" 'May our Fuhrer, supported by the collaboration of every citizen, succeed, with the help of God, in carrying through this immensely heavy task with a firm and unshakable hand!'

"Immediately after the resignation of the Schuschnigg cabinet, which took place on 11 March 1938, Mgr. Innitzer made the following appeal to his flock:

" 'Today the Catholics of the Diocese of Vienna are invited to give thanks to God, our Master, for having seen fit to let the great political changes in Austria take place without bloodshed, and to pray for a happy future for our country. It goes without saying that all the instructions of the authorities should be obeyed willingly and with good grace.'

"On 14 March, the day after the Austrian Anschluss, Hitler arrived in Vienna. Mgr. Innitzer immediately asked for an interview with him. The result of the interview was made known through a press release which contained the Cardinal's directives. . . . Hence

[24]Les catholiques en Europe centrale (Mercure de France, 15 January 1939, pp. 264 et seq.).

the recommendation to the flock to 'follow unreservedly the Great German State and its Fuhrer' as well as the other recommendation, addressed to the clergy, 'to refrain from taking part in polities'. This again is in accordance with the decisions not only of the Pope, but also of the German Episcopate. . . .

"The fourth paragraph forecasts nothing less than the dissolution of the Catholic youth associations; for this is the special meaning of the invitation to the 'chiefs of the youth organizations to make ready for their reunion with the youth organizations of the German Reich'. ... To hand over Catholic youth to Baldur von Schirach's control was to make it follow the 'Rosenberg line'. . . . One has only to examine now the third paragraph of his bulletin:

"From a belief in the communion of spirits derives, for Christians, the conviction that the nation s natural community must fulfil a divine idea; hence the practice of the natural virtues must be the condition of a true religious life.". . .

"That is the crucial point of all these directives. . . . This bulletin is the manifest agreement between Catholicism and National Socialism. . . .

"In Germany, people are devoted to the authoritarian spirit of the National Socialist movement. To illustrate this point, one need do no more than take a close look at the speeches made at the Maria Laach congress. We shall mention only that of the Reverend Father Ildefonso Herwegen, Abbot of this Benedictine monastery who had long had the reputation of being the mouthpiece of those who sympathized with National Socialism. On this occasion, he was pleased to draw a parallel between the authoritarian spirit of monastic life and that of the Third Reich.

"Two years later, in 1935, he wrote a preface to the strangest book that has ever appeared amongst Catholic publications in Germany. It was called 'Katholisch-Konservatives Erbgut'. This anthology, which is a collection of texts by the principal German Catholic theorists, from Gorres to Vogelsang, would have us believe that National Socialism is based purely and simply on the fundamental ideas of Catholicism. ..."

That well-known journalist Emile Bure[35] also recalls how the

[25]L'Ordre de Paris, 9 January 1947.

most eminent representatives of His Holiness have put all their weight behind Hitler's adventures:

"It has been established beyond a shadow of doubt that in 1914 as in 1939, the Vatican was always on the side of the Germans. Why? Because it liked the Germans? No! It was because it disliked the democracy which the Allies were trying to establish. When Clemenceau used to say: 'No agreement with the Church is possible, because she wants the opposite of what we want', he was not speaking lightly...

"When Hitler had brought about the Anschluss with the maximum ferocity of which he was capable, Cardinal Innitzer rushed to assure him of the obedience of the Austrian Catholic clergy. ... In 1936, when anti-Semitism was rife in the universities and schools, and when Jewish shops were being sacked, the Polish Cardinal Hlond said of the Jews that they were 'the advance guard of Bolshevism and atheism'. Cardinal Hlond certainly has on his conscience more than one of the crimes perpetrated on Polish territory during the war at the cry of 'Down with the Jews!'.

"I shall not return to the case of Mgr. Stepinac, Archbishop of Zagreb, who in Croatia blessed and protected the Government of Pavelitch, assassin of King Alexander of Serbia, and of Barthou, and obtained an audience of the Pope during the war. I shall charitably omit the mention of the abominable conduct of certain high dignitaries of the French Church during the occupation. My dossier is too full for it to be exhausted in a single article. ..."

Finally, Mr. J. Tchernoff[36] also gives the same evidence:

"'Nazi Germany was panting under the strain of continual rearmament. In 1936, her position was becoming unbearable; she had to choose between an attack on Russia, with the help of Japan, and an attack on France, who. according to Mein Kampf was Germany's principal enemy.

"On this page of history we see the crystallization of the re-occupation of the Rhineland, the preparations for the Anschluss and the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia; the Spanish war and the fulfilment of Mussolini's grandiose plan which was intended to make him master of the whole Mediterranean region.

[36]Les demagogies contre les democraties (R. Pichon et R. Durand Angias, Paris 1947, pp. 316 et seq.).

"On all these matters, Wickham Steed made a very significant speech at Chatham House; it throws light on the events which, from 1936, led us to the second great war. . . .

"This is how things happened, and here German politics will be found to be closely linked with the Germano-Italian manoeuvres and with the Holy See's tactics towards 'impious' Russia. . . .

"Strangely enough, whereas, dogmatically, the Catholic Church was appearing as the implacable enemy of Nazism and Pius XI was condemning the racist theory, on the other hand, in the political field, even the high dignitaries surrounding the Holy Father were playing the Nazis' game.

"Let us take the facts as they are. It was an ultra-Catholic and ultra-conservative country, Bavaria, that was the cradle of Nazism. . . . The first government that Hitler constituted was two-thirds Catholic. In Czechoslovakia it was Catholic Slovakia that played Hitler's game. . . . The Austrian Cardinal Innitzer literally threw himself at Hitler's feet.... Among Hitler's satellites, it was Catholic Hungary that stayed longest at the persecutor's side. ... It was upon the Catholic population of the Saar that Catholic France was relying in the event of a referendum: her disappointment is well known. . . . There is no point in speaking of Spanish Fascism, of Portugal, an old Catholic country, or of Ireland, one of the few countries that mourned the death of Mussolini. ..."

* * *

It is possible, by reading these texts, to gauge the primordial role of the Vatican in the accession of Nazism, and how amply the title: "It was the Pope who made Hitler", borrowed from the Mercure de France, is justified. Also, it has been easy to see the fundamental reason why the Roman Church helped and supported this new dictator, just as the first whom she had been able to impose upon Europe. That reason has never been better explained than it was by Franz von Papen, the deus ex machina of the operation, when he said:

"Nazism is a Christian reaction against the spirit of 1789".

Nations which cherished democratic principles should have seen the warning.

We shall now examine what happened at this time in another European country which was infected by the Vaticano-Fascist virus—Spain.

CHAPTER III

FRANCO,
THE VATICAN'S INSTRUMENT OF WAR

THE Spanish Civil War, dress rehearsal of the Second World War. — Religion versus the Republic. — Italy and Germany assist the Spanish reaction. — Franco, Moorish troops and Italian and German reinforcements. — Mgr. Gomara: "Blessed be the guns if they make way for the flourishing of the Gospel". The Vatican to the rescue: the anticipated recognition of Franco's rebel government. — The Caudillo, standard-bearer of religion. The Eucharistic Congress of El Ferrol. — Fraternity of the three dictators. — "Hitler, son of the Catholic Church, died defending Christianity". — The Caudillo's office adorned by a strange trio: Hitler, Pius XII and Mussolini. — Clericalism in the schools: the "pernicious" freedoms. — A Church avid of riches. — The Opus Dei. — Religion at the point of the bayonet.

"Blessed be the guns if they make way for the flourishing of the Gospel."

MGR. GOMARA,

Bishop of Cartagena during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).

"In Europe, as in Spain, religion has served as ... a spiritual police force to stand guard around an external order paid to defend moral disorder."

CANON CARLES CARDO.

WE begin here a chapter which—contrarily to what might at first appear—is closely connected with our subject, since it deals with that aspect of the Spanish Civil War which made it a 'dress rehearsal' of the great tragedy that was on its way.

There are some people who readily believe that this was an essentially Iberian affair, a settling of differences between the various parties fighting for power in the peninsula. This is a serious mistake. In fact, Spain, as well as Germany and Italy, was to fall into the vast net that the Vatican was—and still is—fashioning to spread over the world.

Conquered by its devoted followers, these countries were to serve as its tools in bringing to heel those nations which hoped to escape the Papal yoke. It was not in vain, as was soon to become apparent, that France found herself thus hemmed in along her three main frontiers by the dictator states which depended on the Papacy for their inspiration.

We have no hesitation in saying that on the world's chessboard, where this gigantic game went on uninterruptedly, Mussolini, Hitler and Franco, in spite of appearances, were mere pawns in the Vatican's war game.

A priest's testimony-

Canon Carles Cardo[1] writes the following:

"We know Charlemagne's ambition to build a Christian Empire

[1]Histoire spirituelle des Espagnes (Aux Portes de France, Paris 1946)—Imprimatur: Fribourg, 20 October 1945. signed: L. Waeber. Vicaire capitulaire, pp. 305. 33. 92. 125. 145. 151. 192. 209. 220 and 226

which would inherit the Roman Empire, and to share with the Papacy the government of Christendom.

"That Spain is one of the most Catholic peoples of the world, is an obvious truth from many points of view. . . . Spain was called upon to defend and propagate Catholicism—even by the use of arms...

"Its kings thus condemned the Church ... to play before the people the role of defender both of absolutism and of injustice towards the poor. . . . Another thorn in the political side of militant Spanish Catholicism was Radicalism. All or nothing. . . .

"The right-wing parties thought that the whole problem consisted in building political and military walls around the Church and in setting up—by violence if necessary—an entirely Catholic government. All political and even religious perfection lay in possessing that government. ... It was therefore not a necessity of moral perfection, which must precede any real social improvement; nor was it a problem of asceticism, culture or apostolate; it was above all a politico-military problem . . . every move of the Catholics had to be aimed at installing at all costs a political regime of force. . . .

"To treat the people as if they were wild animals which must be tamed by using the Crucifix as whip is the surest way to awaken hatred of the Crucifix. To try to conceal immoralities with the banner of religion is to bring on religion the greatest possible discredit. . . .

"The author of these lines knows something about these things. Civil war against the Republic was wanted at all costs as a prerequisite of religion's victory.. . .

"Alleged appearances of the Virgin, weeping Crucifixes and providentially discovered writings, in which a nun of a century and a half ago had prophesied all that was happening as well as, for the very near future, the inevitable miracle of redemption. ...

"The insistence upon the setting up of an apocryphal kingdom of God, which was in fact the reign of gold and the sword, has ended in catastrophe....

"On 31 March 1934, a fantastic event occurred in Rome. . . . General Emilio Barrera, as military representative, Mr. Rafael Olozabal and Mr. Lizarza, for the Carlist Party, and Mr. Antonio Goicoechea, as Chief of the 'Renovacion Espanola' Party, had an interview with Mussolini and Marshal Italo Balbo, during which the Fascist Government agreed to help the Spaniards with their

plan for an insurrection aimed at the overthrow of the Republic and its replacement by a regency. . . . During the winter of 1935, still under the government of right-centre, negotiations of a similar kind seem to have been started with Germany. . . ."

Premeditation

"From 1934," writes Albert P. Prieur,[2] "Himmler and Heyderich had a delegate in Spain—Hansjurgen Koehler, a German secret police agent.... The Gestapo had sent a General Staff to the Iberian peninsula to organize there a Spanish Gestapo network, which had already been well outlined. The chief of all the 'port services' was Kurt Wermke, collaborator of Himmler and Heyderich. . . .

"In his book, 'Inside the Gestapo', published by 'Pallas Publishing', Hansjurgen Koehler writes in particular:

"... Every German association, club or league, official or otherwise, was feverishly working to supply all the information that was thought necessary. At the same time, the fiercest propaganda was directed against any movement of communistic, socialistic, liberal or masonic tendency, while favouring the right-wing parties and the monarchists. Anybody who was not a friend of the Spanish Fascist parties was accused of being a Jew, a free-mason or a communist. . . . It was necessary to find a Spanish politician or soldier prepared—under German control—to oppose the liberal government and to proclaim the dictatorship. He would also sign a military alliance with the Third Reich.. .. The new man chosen was General Franco.

"In a few months, Franco's friends and associates were occupying the principal military posts....'

"Having started on 17 July 1936 with 35,000 Moorish soldiers, Franco was soon to receive reinforcements from Italy and Germany. On 1 October 1936, after two months of Germano-Italian intervention, Franco installed his government at Burgos. ..."

The Vatican to the rescue

If Mussolini and Hitler were thus supporting their Spanish counterpart as best they could, the Vatican was not inactive either.

[2]Franco est mort (Editions Nicea, Paris 1945, pp. 26 et seq.).

The interest it was taking in the triumph of the "good cause" in the Iberian peninsula soon found expression in the de jure recognition of the Fascist government of Franco, the rebel chief. This striking measure was taken on 3 August 1937, in the middle of the civil war. which was to finish only twenty months later (31 March 1939). By this means, the Pope was applying pressure on the other states, in order to bring them to make the same anticipatory recognition, but above all he was trying to provoke the desertion of the Catholics serving in the Republican armies by indicating to them which was the "legitimate" government.

What was becoming, in this business, of the respect owed by the faithful to the established order, a principle which the Papacy has always flattered itself on preaching?

Spain, the Papacy's preserves

"I never risked talking to Pius XI of the Spanish question", says Frangois Charles-Roux,[3] "he would probably have given me to understand that the Church's interests in the great historic country of Spain were exclusively the business of the Papacy. . . ."

This may be judged from the following extracts taken from Father Duclos :[4]

The Victorious Sword

"When the Caudillo left Morocco to come to Spain's rescue, he was the standard-bearer of religion. . . . Franco had conducted the entire civil war as champion of the Church, while at the same time having the benefit of German support . ... On 23 May 1939, the 'Osservatore Romano' announced that Franco was solemnly offering his victorious sword to God, on 12 June, the 'Osservatore Romano' stressed the warm welcome given by Pius XII to 3,000 soldiers and officers from Catholic Spain: on 17 August came the news of the reinstalment of crucifixes in every Spanish school. . . .

"The Osservatore Romano of 19 July 1940 described the magnificent display of the Eucharistic Congress at El Ferrol; . . on 15 August, there was the description of the impressive celebrations of

[3]Huit ans au Vatican, p. 181.
[4]Le Vatican et la seconde guerre mondiale (Nihil obstat, 20 March 1955. Imprimatur, 4 October 1955). Editions A. Pedone, Paris 1955, pp. 116 and 117.

Saint James's Day at Santiago, in the presence of the Archbishop and the Minister of National Education. On 8 August, the German Ambassador at Madrid informed Berlin that Franco was still in favour of collaboration. . . .

"On 24 January 1941, the Osservatore Romano hastened to quote at length: The unique and true doctrine of the two perfect societies, with harmony between State and Church, was recently set out in our present Pontiff's first encyclical Summi Pontificatus. The Franco State accepts the Church's principles, which are those of God. . . .' The Nuncio Cicognani and Serrano Suner, Minister of Foreign Affairs, signed the convention of 7 June 1941, granting to the Chief of the Spanish State the right to make to the Pope nominations for the office of bishop; it is specified that this privilege is granted in virtue of 'the merit acquired by new Spain in the eyes of the Church'."

Then again, Francois Mirandet[5] writes:

"The Catholic Church . . . has resolutely taken its stand behind Franco. The Franco regime, for its part, shows the most profound veneration for the Church: 'Our movement, says the programme of the Falange, will instil the Catholic spirit into national reconstruction". This found expression in the restitution to the Catholic Church of its status of the established religion. . . . The Church enjoyed a privileged position, and its activity goes far beyond the strictly religious domain. . . . The State undertakes to execute sentences passed by the prelates. . . . The authorities' excessive solicitude for the Church gives rise to some anxiety.... The Falange has undertaken to have painted or engraved on church walls the names of those who. in the sacred formula, have died for God and Spain. . . ."

In face of the persistence and energy with which the "triplet" regimes of Italy, Germany and Spain asserted at every turn and in almost identical terms their perfect unity with the Vatican, how can anyone doubt that this is where they originated?

To quote Camille Cianfarra :[6]

"The Papacy has been accused of upholding Fascism, the argument being that the Spanish clergy sided with Franco and that the Vatican gave its moral support to the insurgents during the civil

[5]L'Espagne de Franco (Hachette. Paris 1948, pp. 27 to 29).
[6]La guerre et le Vatican (Le Portulan. Paris 1946, pp. 369 et seq.).

war. The Vatican has never hidden its liking for the Spanish dictator . . . For the Holy See, Franco represented the defender of the Church in Spain. . . ."

Similarly, the "brotherly" character of these regimes was loudly proclaimed, whenever an opportunity offered.

In 1938, de Lequerica wrote:

"Fifteen years ago this fraternity in life and in death which now binds us to Italy did not exist. We are united in a common hatred of the enemy, whether this enemy be Communism or Democracy".

And later, in a letter (3 June 1940) to his beloved Hitler, Franco wrote:

"At this time when, under your leadership, the German armies are bringing to a victorious close the greatest battle of history, I wish to convey to you my enthusiasm and my admiration, as well as that of my people who have followed with emotion the development of a glorious fight that they feel to be their own. ..."

There are innumerable quotations of this kind.

Berlin—Madrid

"The fall of France", writes F. Mirandet,[7] "the capitulation of the government of Bordeaux and the signing of the armistice were greeted with an enthusiastic clamour by the Franco press and radio . . . overflowing with admiration for the German army, 'herald of the New Order'. . . .

"If Europe's fate is already decided, declared Franco, it should not be forgotten that it was on our soil that the first battle of the 'New Order' took place. At the same time, he issued a warning to America: 'It is criminal folly to suppose that the fate of the war can be changed by the entry into the fight of a new power'."

Yet his great friend was defeated. On 3 May 1945, the day Hitler died, Franco[8] had his papers publish the following:

"Adolf Hitler, son of the Catholic Church, has died defending Christianity. It is understandable that our pen cannot find words with which to deplore his death, when it was able to find so many to extol his life. Above his mortal remains rises his victorious moral figure.

[7] L'Espagne de Franco, pp. 60. 72. 82. 110, 113. 122, 153.
[8] Reforme, 21 July 1945.

With the crown of martyrdom, God gives to Hitler the laurels of Victory."

And the Caudillo's office was already adorned by a strange trio: Hitler, Pius XII and Mussolini. ...

Children of Spain, beware of the thirteen deadly sins!

"Such is the command contained in the 'Franco Catechism of 1946' which condemns as pernicious the freedom of the press, modernism and other types of Socialism", writes Maurice Felut.[9] "If it is true that the Holy Apostolic and Roman Church is one and indivisible in its faith and doctrine, the French faithful who might have been moved by the Episcopate's recent proclamation that the freedom of education would be defended by 'every means' will be alarmed when they read Father Ripalda's catechism, which is being taught in Spanish schools under the high patronage of the Bishops of Almeria, Seville, Cadiz and Cordoba. . . . Thirteen modern errors are branded as infamous in this charitable work. Here they are: materialism, Darwinism, atheism, pantheism, deism, rationalism, protestantism, socialism, communism, trade-unionism, liberalism, modernism and Freemasonry.

"And this is how the author commits them to juvenile indignation. Protestantism first: the founder of this heresy was a conceited and corrupt apostate priest called Luther! Socialism: an absurd system and, furthermore, unjust. If Communism is rejected as being equally absurd, what is to be said of this definition of trade-unionism: the union of the working classes for the destruction of society, the dispersion of private property and the defence of their alleged rights!

The "pernicious freedoms"

"After the assertions of principle, come the temporal rules:
Q.—Must the State be laic ?
A.—On no account. It must profess the Catholic religion, which is the only true religion. It must subject itself to the Church, as the body to the soul and the temporal to the eternal.
Q.—Must this State tolerate the freedom of the press?
A.—No, for the freedom of the press implies the ability to print and

[9] France-Soir, 26 March 1946.

to publish, without preventive censorship, all manner of opinions, no matter how absurd and corrupt.

Q.—Must the Government repress this freedom by means of preventive censorship?

A.—Yes, undoubtedly.

Q.—Why?

A.—Because false beliefs, calumny, and the corruption of its subjects are directly opposed to the common good and must be prevented.

Q.—Are there other harmful freedoms ?

A.—Yes, the freedom of education, the freedom of propaganda and of assembly."

A Church avid of riches

"Ever since the Emperor Constantine recognized the Catholic Church's right to acquire wealth", writes Emmanual Robles,[10] "the clergy of the peninsula, in order to increase, or to keep its riches, have always interfered with the political and economic life of the country. They have always embraced the cause of those who guaranteed them wealth already acquired, and have always attacked the others. Moreover, the entire Spanish legislature, from the Fuero Juzgo to the last Republican Constitution, has tried to moderate this avidity of the clergy, and one might say, with the historian Ramon Portela, that 'almost the whole of Spanish history is based upon the struggle of the State against the insatiable ambition of the Church'. . . .

"The whole of Spanish popular literature is full of allusions to this avidity of a covetous and cynical clergy. In the dark ages, this propaganda was cautious, for the servants of the God of Love were not too kind of heart and would well and truly flay or burn to death any creature who showed even the slightest ill intention. Church-folk abound among the characters of these popular tales-both oral and written—but in general they do not portray virtue. . . . Popular tales may caricature reality but they are based on it. In English popular literature also, for instance, parsons are ridiculed. But they are always virtuous and it is only their puritanism, their imperturbable serenity or their gossiping nature that is made fun of.

[10]Le clerge d'Espagne avec Franco (Le Populaire, 25 January 1947).

"During the 'civil' war. the great majority of the clergy were on the side of the rebels. . . .

"Even today, people are tortured and shot in the prisons of Spain. Not one of the high dignitaries of the Church has stood up to the executioners of a generous people who thought, as Camus wrote, 'that to conquer, it was sufficient to be right'. Not one of these prelates . . . covered in gold and brocade has ever protested against the massacres. New convents have been opened. New chasubles have been embroidered, more sumptuous and richer in precious stones. And, unscrupulously, the adoration of Him who brought immense hope has continued, of Him who was the first to preach, with overwhelming power and conviction, respect for human dignity".

As in the days of Isabella

"There is the usual ostentatious display in the procession at Seville", writes Michel Salmon.[11] "Austere Spaniards, in black suits and stiff collars, and perspiring profusely, carry at arm's length heavy and sumptuous virgins—covered in diamonds and brocade—and saintly relics in their solid gold shrines. Hooded penitents follow holding long candles. . . . Sinister reminder of medieval Spain, of "la Espana negra" of Torquemada and of the autos-da-fe, the heavy yoke which has been weighing upon the shoulders of this country for more than five centuries. . . .

"On this mere strip of land, the Church has remained as powerful as in the days of Isabella, as narrow and as mercilessly fanatic. . . . By giving its support to the country's most reactionary forces, the Church neutralized all attempts to democratize Spain. . . . Today, under the regime that she appears to favour most—military dictatorship—the Church represents by far the most considerable political power of Spain. Her hold over the illiterate masses of countrymen, and especially the women, is complete. Her riches are inestimable.... The ecclesiastics are exempted from all taxes and enjoy innumerable privileges. The most flourishing ventures on the black market are in the hands of priests or of clerks belonging to the Church. Whole cargoes of coffee, sugar, cloths—supposedly gifts from American

[11] Franc-7 treur, 9 November 1949

churches—are delivered to them, tax-free, whereas the ordinary Spaniard has to pay customs duties that rank among the highest in Europe.

"The Church, apart from the special organizations and its orders-including the famous omnipotent Company of Jesus—comprises a sort of clerical freemasonry, the 'Opus Dei'. How is it possible to start useful discussions with a church that sits mesmerized in nostalgic contemplation of the Middle Ages and lives by the oppression of ten million men whom she helps to exploit ? What answer can be expected of those prelates whose divine order is that of Franco? Of those crusades that were Isabella"s 'Reconquista' in reverse, with legions of mercenary Arabs?

"A picture that people in Madrid remembered has for long haunted my mind. It was on that funeral day of March 1939, when the first Franco troops set foot on the soil of Madrid. Preceding a Moorish detachment, there walked a bearded Franciscan, in soutane and hood; he was holding his crucifix in one hand and with the other was waving an imposing Mauser at the houses and their blind windows. 'Por Dios, por Espana y la Santa Fe catolica". ..."

From Guernica to Buchenwald

"The facts are there: they unfold in logical sequence from Guernica to Buchenwald. . . . The powers of evil have been ruling over Spain ever since July 1936. . . .

"And let me speak in a firm voice about the thing which above all forces itself upon Christian attention, reading and meditating upon the charge made by Dr. Ruys. . . . There was an overwhelming majority of priests and bishops who, like Judas, betrayed their Master; there was above all a Church which patronized and subsidized the seditious movement and induced naive or deliberately unseeing Christians the world over to believe the legend of the "Holy Crusade" for the defence of the Apostolic and Roman Catholic religion. This Church has spread its cloak over the shameful assassinations, blessed the arms of those who were about to shoot their brothers, and participated in the autos-da-fe of Pamplona. . . . I heard with my own ears people who—in all good faith—extolled the 'Cadets of Toledo' and the 'Spanish Crusades' as defenders of the faith and heralds of Christ. Poor Christ of Spain, hanging from the arm of the Swastika, as

Don Diego put it. Alas, his effigy is taken for a standard by the very people who crucify him daily. There is the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost."[12]

Hitler and Mussolini are dead. Dead also are the regimes of absolutism and terror they instituted. None the less, by a strange paradox, the forces of evil denounced by Dr. Ruys are still in the saddle in Spain. Thanks to the weakness—or the deliberate intent—of the Allies, obscurantism of the worst kind still obfuscates the minds of the Spaniards.

Religion at the point of the bayonet

" 'The Paredon', which lies between the outer angle of the cemetery and a break in a rusty-coloured hillock, is the place", says Roger Klein,[13] "where the big massacres took place after the fall of Madrid on 29 March 1939. The men on the right, the women on the left. Torn to pieces by the salvos, the murdered victims were left as they lay. . . . The Church refused them Christian burial. . . . The crows and the dogs fought over their flesh. . . . Month after month, every day at daybreak, lorry after lorry—twenty or thirty of them—packed with prisoners, their hands tied behind their backs.

"The Church had enough authority over the murderers, after their victory of 1939, to put a stop to this never-ending feast of Saint-Bartholomew. She did nothing; she did not even banish those of her servants who participated in the crime themselves by drawing up the lists of their parishioners to be killed. . . ."

* * *

What can we add to this testimony? We are obliged to acknowledge that this crime committed by the Roman Catholic Church against the very spirit of Christianity has been repeated time and time again in every country, however far back in history one may go. To take only recent years, whether in Italy, Germany, Spain, Mgr. Tiso's Slovakia, Ante Pavelitch's Croatia, martyred Poland or

[12] Extracts from an article by Suzanne Cadier, published in Reforme, 28 July 1945, concerning the work Les Forces du mat en Espagne, by Dr. Diego Ruys.

[13] L'Eglise, plus puissante encore que le Caudillo, ne fait rien pour arreter l'Interminable Saint-Barthelemy (Franc-Tireur, 17 September 1947).

enslaved France, the Church—because of its essential character has always been on the side of the executioner.

CHAPTER IV

BELGIUM UNDER THE SIGN OE "CHRISTUS REX"

THE Catholic Action in Belgium and its political expression : "Christus Rex". — The testimony of Raymond de Becker, former Rexist: Livre des vivants et des morts. Education at the Jesuits'. Youth's spiritual crisis between the two world wars. The Catholic Action in conquest of the modern world. Mgr. Picard, Canon Cardijn and their creature Leon Degrelle, apostles of Fascism. L'Action catholique, corrupter of consciences. Journey to Rome. "You men from the north believe in dogmas. We make them". — Retreat to the Trappe. Pius XI, Enemy of France. — German aggression: Belgium collapses, undermined by the "fifth column". — Leon Degrelle on the Russian front. The Memoirs of a braggart.

> "In this struggle, we have to be on Germany's side; That is why the young people must join the SS. Glory fires the blood and spurs on the soul."
>
> FATHER VERSCHAEVE
> (Jong Europa, 1942)

> "Catholicism is hostile to intellectual liberty and incompatible with the principle and trend of modern civilization; it arouses unwarrantable pretensions to govern, and threatens the rights of the family; it tends to undermine the soul's love of truth; it alienates cultured minds in whatever country it is professed, and, wherever it reigns, saps the morality and strength of the state."
>
> GLADSTONE.

AFTER Italy and Mussolini's Fascism; Germany and Hitler's Nazism; and Spain and the Falangism of General Franco, a similar situation created by the Vatican in another European country can now be examined. We shall thus add Rexist Belgium to the Papacy's honours list.

"Christus Rex" was a subversive political movement set up by the Catholic Action. The objective of its leaders was not spiritual revival, but to attract to themselves young Catholics who could first be schooled to the fascist ideology boosted by the Papacy, and then launched forth on the attack against democracy. Cardinal Van Rooy, Primate of Belgium, gave his blessing to the new catechumens of Fascism, as follows:

"Greetings, young troop of the glorious Catholic Army! I salute and bless you in the name of all Belgian bishops."

Some of the catechumens were disillusioned, but they were not all able to make a timely escape from the yoke of Mgr. Picard and Canon Cardijn.

We have an example in the moving testimony of a former Rexist and seminarist, Raymond de Becker. His book: Livre des vivants et des morts[1] is an autobiographical narrative of great interest. He

[1]Editions de la Toison d'Or, Brussels 1942, pp. 8, 27, 52, 53, 61 to 63. 64. 65 to 68. 70 to 73.

describes his activity in the bosom of the Catholic Action and takes us behind the scenes of this movement, run by the Vatican for solely political ends. It is important to note that Raymond de Becker's testimony is particularly valuable since he was tried and convicted of collaboration with the enemy.

"The majority among the bourgeois circles", he writes, "considered it better to put their children to school in Jesuit colleges or episcopal colleges than in the state schools.... At the age of seven, therefore, I was sent to the Institut Sainte-Marie. . . .

"We had constantly before our eyes nothing but figures of the sorrowing Virgin and of Christ crucified; from the outset our consciences were tormented and distorted by visions of blood and horror. . . . Our minds could get no farther than the narrow confines of dogma, and our consciences suffered terrors which had no connexion with real life. . . ."

The author goes on to describe his early experiences of the world, which happened to be in a small job in a commercial firm. But he was disheartened by the uninteresting work and the vulgarity of his colleagues :

"Thus, when one of my friends, who had been seduced by the priestly vocation and was several years older than I, tried to convince me, his affection and arguments met with little opposition. ... I therefore accepted Catholicism once again . . . and this is how I came to join the Action Catholique de la Jeunesse (Catholic Youth Movement). . . ."

Raymond de Becker then describes the spiritual crises that Europe was going through after the war, and the rising generation's deep-rooted desire for a bright new world:

"In Belgium and among most Catholic youths of Europe, this need for the absolute and for renewal was thought to have found its expression in the Action Catholique. . . . Everyone, except for a few people who deliberately closed their eyes, was forced to recognize that Catholic Europe now existed only in history books. . . . Consequently, Catholic Action began as the expression of a sincere impulse.... The Church found in Pope Pius XI an inspired man who was resolved to free her from her age-old fetters and so enable her to conquer the modern world. His call found a particularly enthusiastic echo in Belgium. . . .

"Catholic Action had found in Belgium some men exceptionally well suited to develop ideas and propagate them among the people. The first was Mgr. Picard ... the other was Canon Cardijn, founder of the 'Jocist' movement, an irascible, violent-tempered and visionary individual... . I joined the secretariat of Catholic Action at Louvain, as Secretary General of the J.I.C. (Jeunesse Independante Catholique). A certain Father Foucart, a bearded Jesuit, used to come regularly to the secretariat . . . among whom was Victor Mathys, who was later to become Director of the Pays Reel and head of 'Rex' during Leon Degrelle's absence at the eastern front. This little group used to meet at mealtimes and in the chapel, for common prayers. ...

"One day 1 was in Father Desmedt's office, when the door burst open. . . . Father Desmedt shouted almost as loudly as the intruder and they both seemed very pleased with themselves. . . . Father Desmedt turned to me, full of enthusiasm:

'It's Leon Degrelle, a tough guy!'

"Incidentally, Leon Degrelle also was living in the house. . . .

" We all were, even then, agitated by a kind of Fascism. . . . Indeed, it should be noted that the Catholic Action circles in which I moved were most sympathetic towards Italian Fascism. . . . Mgr. Picard proclaimed Mussolini's genius from the housetops and prayed for the coming of a dictator. . . . Moreover, contacts with Italy and Fascism were being encouraged through pilgrimages. On one occasion, when I was returning with three hundred students from a visit to Italy, everyone was giving the Roman salute and singing 'Giovinezza' . . ."

Another writer, Jacques Saint-Germain,[2] gives the following details on Mgr. Picard's role:

"Mgr. Picard displayed remarkable activity. . . . From 1928 onwards, Leon Degrelle's group was to collaborate regularly with Mgr. Picard. The youngsters learned from him the thousand and one details of methods of modern propaganda ... of the way to spread ideas. . . . Mgr. Picard entrusted Leon Degrelle with a particularly important mission—that of running a new publishing house established within the Catholic Action secretariat. This publishing house was soon to become famous: it was called Rex.

[2]La Bataille de Rex (Les Oeuvres Francaises, Paris 1937, pp. 60 to 67, 69, 70, 80, 81, 82, 115, 130. 89 et seq.).

The apostles of Fascism

"On 10 October 1931, the Rex publishers launched the first paper to be directed by Leon Degrelle. ... It was called Soirees . . . from that day a new breeze blew over the Catholic world. ... On 30 September 1932, Leon Degrelle threw himself into the fray and on that day Soirees launched a political supplement called Rex.

"The appeals for a new regime were increasing ... the astonishing results of this propaganda in Germany were noted with much interest. In an article of October 1933, Vlan recalled that the Nazis had numbered only seven in 1919, and that a few years later, Hitler had brought them the sole asset of his gift for publicity. . . . Founded upon similar principles, the Rexist team began its active propaganda within the country. ... On 8 July 1933, the first 'Rex' manifesto was published. It read:

'Rex' is:

1. A youth movement;
2. A movement of Catholic action.

'Rex' will devote itself:

1. To Belgium, to reinvigorate its blood. . . .
2. To Christ, Christus Rex, by devoting to Him every effort of its soldiers and apostles. . . .

" 'The present 'Rex' movement works like a police force', wrote Le Peuple. 'Every Fascist movement has had the same rowdy character in its origins. . . .'

"The whole intellectual standpoint of the young movement was. indeed, violently opposed to the ideology of 1789. . . ."

Thus, since it worked by undermining, Catholic Action was preparing war from inside. It was found to be an efficient corrupter of consciences.

"A book we came across at that time had a great influence upon our generation. It was Un nouveau moyen age, by Nicolas Berdiaeff ....'The time is near!' wrote Berdiaeff, 'for extreme application .... A special type of monastic life will have to be developed in the world, a kind of 'New Order'.' ... I could think of this new totalitarian order only as Catholic. . . ."

Yet a pilgrimage to Rome left Raymond de Becker[3] on the whole

[3]Livre des vivants et des moris, pp. 73, 74. 82. 101 112 to 118, 134 to 139 and 140

with a feeling of disappointment:

"Rome gives one much more the impression of being a great pagan city than a Christian capital ... a basilica such as Saint Peter's is disconcerting in its coldness and magnificence. It is so much designed for spectacular demonstrations that the soul is turned away from meditation and love. When I reached the Vatican, it conveyed to me anything but a religious impression. . . . We went in procession through the streets of Rome, singing the Magnificat. ... An eminent Roman said to me, somewhat cynically:

—You men from the north believe in dogmas. We make them."

Back in Belgium, Raymond de Becker got in touch with a young solicitor, Marcel Laloire:

"He published a small paper, Les Jeunesses Politiques, which devoted much of its space to the study of youth movements which, in Italy, Germany, Spain and Portugal, were seeking to reform the state so as to make it fascist."

Yet, he was not entirely satisfied with this political activity:

"I had been sickened by the sight of Catholic politicians. ... I wanted to give myself to Christ . . . and I felt that this could be done only by breaking away from all my attachments and by renouncing the world...."

Hence his retreat to a Trappist monastery:

"I intended to stay two years in my retreat in Savoy (at the Trappe de Tami6) and to devote myself to prayer. . . . This Trappe must have been particularly backward, for care of the body and culture of the mind were regarded with equal horror; baths and showers, of course, were obviously unknown there and, in order to fight against vermin, the monks had a special place for de-lousing; as for reading matter, any but the missal and the bible was unknown. . . . One found the lowest passions and the meanest rivalry. . . . Often the only heavenly peace one saw was in the outward acts and the style of the community . . . a pious and honest monk told me: 'When I forsook the world and came to this monastery, I imagined I was taking leave also of Satan and sin, but the doors of this retreat had hardly shut behind me when I found myself face to face with them again. . . .' We lived in the Middle Ages there... . A tribe of outcasts trailed about with their physical ailments and mental defects. An epileptic teacher, whose illness prevented him

from reaching any high orders, a neurasthenic layman and a rachitic adolescent made up a veritable Court of Miracles. ... I had not enough confidence in my physical and mental equilibrium to have no fear of the friendship of men who were sick and unbalanced. . . . One of the brothers went raving mad, and had to be forcibly removed to Albertville asylum. ... I could not conceive of heroism or holiness in the form of illness. In a mind as great as Pascal's pessimism revolted me. ... I decided to leave this place for a while and to make a pilgrimage, with a friend, to Sainte Baume, Provence. . . . This struck me rather as a vast waste land, or a burned-out graveyard in which the vestiges of a great old civilization lay petrified. . . . In the churches, the number of faithful was reduced to the minimum. . .. Yet, this could not destroy the impression we had of Christianity still lingering in this land, rather as Paganism had lingered in Europe several centuries after the appearance of the Christian faith."

Pius XI, France's enemy

"Incidentally, it was at Martigue that I had the opportunity of meeting Charles Maurras. . . . Maurras made some particularly insulting remarks about Pope Pius XI, who he insisted was nothing but France's enemy and the servant of Germany."

Painful intellectual acrobatics of the Roman writers

"The great men of French Catholicism did not strike me as very great men . . . their inability to face the world of today made me think of them as the product of decadence. ... I then worked with the Avant-Garde. . . . This paper clearly tried to wean away Belgium from its association with Anglo-French policy. . . .

"The mythical character of Catholic dogma was becoming ever more apparent to me. The effects of the Catholic theologians to go beyond the literal sense of dogmatic beliefs and to give them a spiritual content compatible with our scientific knowledge, seemed like intellectual acrobatics very similar to those of the last pagan philosophers who, at Alexandria, had tried to save the old Greek and Roman myths by denying their literal significance and attributing them an allegorical meaning."

Europe, however, was not long in joining the "phoney" war, and the time was coming when the intrigues of the Belgian Catholic

Action would produce the first result planned: the rapid collapse of the nation before Hitler's offensive. During the night of 9 to 10 May 1940, German troops crossed the frontier.

Lion Degrelle was not in fact arrested by the Belgian authorities: they did not have the time. The Germans, thanks to the sustained underground work of the "Fifth column", were invading Belgium And the head of Christus Rex was at last able openly to serve the masters he had chosen for himself and for his country.

Like the Baudrillarts, the Deats, the Mayol de Luppes, the Doriots and the Darnands in France, Degrelle appointed himself recruiter of those legions who, wearing the German uniform and swearing allegiance to Hitler, went to the eastern front, to fight the "common enemy".

He placed himself at their head. But if, to judge by appearances, he did little harm to the Russians, he did much on the other hand to his compatriots.

"Ten years ago", wrote Maurice A. de Behault[4] in 1954, "the Port of Antwerp, the third in importance in the whole world, fell almost intact into the hands of the British troops. The Allies thus miraculously took possession of the Continent's only equipped port, which meant that the route used to reprovision the troops in the lines had been shortened by 700 km.

"Just when the population was within sight of the end of its sufferings and privations, it was assailed by the most diabolical of all Nazi inventions: flying bombs or V1s and V2s. This bombardment, the longest ever, since it was to last almost six months, night and day, was carefully hushed up, by order of Allied headquarters. That is why little is generally known of the martyrdom of the town of Antwerp and of Liege.

"On the eve (of the first bombardment—12 October 1944) some had heard the disturbing utterances made by the Rexist traitor Leon Degrelle over the Berlin radio: 'I have asked my Fuhrer', he declared, 'for twenty thousand flying bombs. They will chastise an imbecile nation. They will turn Antwerp into a portless town or a townless port, I promise you. . . .'

"At 09.40 hours the first V1 bomb fell right in the middle of the town. They were to fall night and day for almost six months, almost

[4]Revue Historia. December 1954.

without respite."

Such was the last exploit of the chief of "Christus Rex", the darling pupil of Cardinal Van Rooy, Primate of Belgium, of Mgr. Picard and of Canon Cardijn. The last-named was soon rewarded for having produced such a brilliant disciple: Pius XII made him a prince of the Church and entrusted him with the world management of all "jocist" (Jeunesse Ouvriere Catholique) movements. We may be sure that he will continue to do a good job of work, as in the past.

Thus heroic Belgium, so cruelly martyred in 1914-1918. was to be delivered to the enemy in 1940 by those who, under the guise of "regenerating" the country, were preparing it a second martyrdom—a martyrdom which they prolonged, as has just been shown, until the last day of the war.

Like many of his emulators, after the defeat the Rexist traitor fled to Spain, leaving less important gentlemen to pay the bill.

* * *

Another book, though of far inferior quality, might be likened to that of Raymond de Becker, and might as Denis Marion has said, be entitled "The Memoirs of a Braggart". It is the work of Leon Degrelle himself.

On 17 March 1946, Louis Picard made this declaration:

"Whereas in Belgium the atmosphere strikes us as sometimes being literally poisoned with the question of purging, it is a bitter experience to see how astonishingly slowly the chastisement of war criminals is taking place in Germany. Since I am speaking of war criminals, I must refer to the Leon Degrelle case. So far. Spain has refused to hand over to us Degrelle, Belgian traitor No 1."

Indeed, the apostle of "Christus Rex" stayed in Franco's country, spending his leisure writing his political and military memoirs:

"If it is to be regretted", writes Denis Marion,[5] "from the point of view of justice, that Leon Degrelle should so far have escaped punishment, we are nevertheless gaining an important document: without the publication of his memoirs, we should never have known

[5]Les memoires d'un matamore (Carrefour, 2 September 1949)

the extent of the gullibility of this handful of traitors. It was difficult to imagine that they were even more stupid than abject."

* * *

Thus, Catholic Action facilitated the Nazi-Fascist victory outside the frontiers of Germany and Italy. Its main task was to undermine people's minds, to organize dissidence and to recruit assassins. It was among the Christian youth, schooled and trained by Catholic Action, that Leon Degrelle drew the most devoted members of his monstrous Waffen SS "Death's Head" brigades.

This horrible spider's web stretched across Belgium, France, Italy and the other countries of papal obedience, having declared its mission to be the moral and religious training of its militants, and claiming to be an "apostolic organization", appeared in practice as a powerful organism of Nazi-Fascist liaison, an agent of national and social decomposition.

In reality, the Church on the march means Fascism on the march.

CHAPTER V

VATICAN-HITLERIST ACTIVITY IN THE UNITED STATES

A NATION of essentially Protestant origin. The Catholic strength increased by the nineteenth century influx of Italian and Irish immigrants. — A powerful minority: the German-Americans. — Hitlerist and Fascist propaganda under the aegis of the Vatican before the second world war. Importance of the fifth column: military-like leagues and formations. Hitlerist demonstrations in the principal American towns. — The Christian front, and its Director, the Jesuit Father Coughlin, Apostle of the Swastika. His wireless broadcasts reach millions of listeners. An official document: letter from the Ambassador of the Reich at the Holy See, mentioning the efforts of the International Catholic Truth Society to prevent the United States from entering the war alongside the Allies. — Pearl-Harbour and the leap of Yankee patriotism.—After the war: the Jesuits continue their work of infiltration and of setting up cells in the United States. They spread their influence through their educational establishments. The University of Georgetown, seed-bed of American diplomacy, directed by the Jesuit Father Walsh, the well-known pro-Hitlerist. —Mgr. Spellman, personal friend of Pius XII, and Catholic Action. — Again Father Walsh: he was the keeper of Senator McCarthy's conscience. — Abuses of the "witch hunts". Congress reacts. — Vigilance essential. "The Roman Church knows how to hide even her name". — A warning: The "democracies seem always to be warming their enemies in their own bosoms."

"Germany's war is a battle for Christianity."

JESUIT FATHER COUGHLIN,
Chief of the Christian Front (7 July 1941)

"It is not without interest in characterizing the evolution in the United States in the field of anti-Semitism, to know that the audience of the "radio priest", Father Coughlin, well-known for his anti-Semitism, exceeds twenty millions."
Secret archives of the Wilhelmstrasse (document 83-26 19/1, Berlin, 25 January 1939).

"There is no longer—and there never will be—any compromise between Good and Evil."

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT.

THE fact that we propose to demonstrate in this book, that of the perfect agreement between two creeds of domination—Roman Catholicism and Pan-Germanism—would be less than apparent if we were to leave aside a certain extra-European theatre where they also worked together—the United States of America.

At first sight, the great republic of the New World would not appear to offer a very favourable ground for such an undertaking. It is difficult to imagine that Fascism or Hitlerism might hope for success in a country whose traditions are so essentially liberal and that the Vatican should have much influence in a nation of which by far the great majority is Protestant. Today, there are 30 million Catholics there, mostly of Irish or Italian origin, out of a total of 160 million. The German-Americans form a powerful minority whose members often occupy very important positions in business. This makes it easier to understand that Nazi or Vatican propaganda—they are the same thing—should have been able to function openly in the United States before and during the second world war and even to have a great influence on the country's foreign policy.

We shall see later, moreover, that the defeat of Hitler and his allies has in no way slowed down this propaganda. In fact, one is tempted to add: quite the contrary.

It is a notorious fact that the Germans have always excelled in spying and undermining within the heart of foreign communities. Six years before the war, Pro-Hitler organizations abounded in the United States. We shall list only a few, connected with Vatican-Fascist groups working for the same end:

Kyffhaeuserbund (German ex-servicemen's league)
A. V. Jugendschaft (Hitlerist Youth)
Christian Action
Germano-American League
Ordnungsdienst (Shock troops for the maintenance of order)
Stahlhelm (Steel helmets)
Italian Fascist clubs
Blackshirts
Falangists
Deutscher Krieger Bund of North America
Christian Front, etc . . .

The activity exercised by these subversive groups was such that, even in 1935, the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Harold-L. Ickes, had no hesitation in saying:

"It becomes clearer every day that a criminal movement is plotting, in our country, the substitution of an odious Fascist system for our free American institutions."

This cry of alarm will be understood when it is realized that the "Kyffhaeuser Bund" and its affiliated movements alone numbered 200,000 members, and that on certain occasions its shock troops, dressed in brown shirts, a Swastika on the arm-band, and roaring: "Heil Hitler!" were goose-stepping by the thousand through American towns.

But more important and more dangerous still was the "Christian Front", led by the Jesuit Father Coughlin, a well-known pro-Hitlerist. This pious organization wanted for nothing, and was receiving from Berlin a copious supply of propaganda carefully adapted by Goebbels' office.

Through his newspaper Social Justice and his radio broadcasts, the Jesuit Father Coughlin, apostle of the Swastika, reached a vast audience. In addition, he maintained in the principal urban centres, shock cells, which were secret, needless to say, as is only becoming for the sons of Loyola, and were trained by Nazi agents.

The first objective of this clerical fifth column was obviously to create among American Catholics, as their colleagues were trying to do in Europe, a current of sympathy towards the dictators, proteges of Saint Peter, and thereby to prevent the Washington Government from entering the war alongside the Allies.

The existence of para-military formations in these movements proves that their chiefs were contemplating the possibility of backing up persuasion with force, if need be.

The importance with which the Nazi Government regarded this work of poisoning American public opinion appears from the following document:[1]

"Rome, 26 September 1939
(POL IX 2034)

The Ambassador of the Reich at the Holy See to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

I have the honour to send you copies of several reports, to which my attention has been drawn by certain religious circles, and which emanate from the National Catholic Welfare Conference; this, as you know, is the accredited news agency for the entire Catholic press of the United States. The report from Brooklyn, dated 8 September deserves special mention; it concerns the mass meetings organized by the International Catholic Truth Society in the biggest towns of the United States, under the slogan: 'What can you do to keep the United States out of the war?' Among the motions proposed by the Society, it is worth noting a draft bill that is to be placed before the American Congress stipulating that any declaration of war must first be submitted to a plebiscite. The reports of the National Catholic Welfare Conference show in what large measure the feeling against the war exists among American Catholics and how much this feeling is favoured by the influential personalities belonging to these circles.

(Signed) Von Bergen.

Is it not significant that this document should come from the Ambassador of the Reich to the Holy See? The close agreement between the two powers is once more made apparent by the process

[1]Secret archives of the Wilhelmstrasse.

of "osmosis" which caused their information services to inter-communicate.

* * *

In fact, this pacifist propaganda of the Vaticano-Hitlerists proved most efficacious. Nothing less than the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour was needed to bring it to a stop.

It was less than four months after that attack—i.e., 27 March 1942—that Japan entered into diplomatic relations with the Holy See. Here is what Camille Cianfarra[2] has to say about this:

"The Fascist press had immediately interpreted the event as a diplomatic victory for Japan over the United States. . . . According to La Nazione, of Turin, at the beginning of the negotiations that were to end in the concluding of the Vatican-Japanese agreement, Washington made an energetic protest to the Secretary of State, through its representative, Myron Taylor, and attempted at the same time to influence the Holy See by means of a violent anti-Japanese radio propaganda campaign."

However, the defeat of Hitler and his acolytes was not to put an end to the Vatican's insidious work in free America. Does it not still have 30 million of the faithful there—Italian and particularly Irish—that is, 30 million who are blindly devoted to the Holy See ? It is more than the Jesuits require to develop a large-scale operation, of the kind needed to ensure that occult domination over the State which is the overriding purpose of their society. The University of Georgetown where all the teaching staff is Jesuit is one of their strong-holds. It is there that the majority of American diplomats have been, and are being, trained under their care. The great advantage given them by this grip on the diplomatic service is obvious. Moreover, the numerous educational establishments that they have in the country, attended by children of the governing classes, are ceaselessly extending their influence in these circles. Furthermore the good Fathers—as is well known—are past masters in the art of keeping up with their former pupils and in "following" them in life and giving them their support. Needless to say, they expect their pupils to reciprocate. Thus, the illustrious Society is always represented

[2]La guerre et le Vatican, p. 395.

in the principal State posts of command—as is the case in Europe, incidentally—and is able to intervene in a most efficacious and sometimes decisive way.

In its issue of 28 July 1949, Action wrote as follows on the subject:

"It is a fact that the policy of the State Department is under the influence of Cardinal Spellman. At least 50% of State Department personnel represent the point of view taught by the University of Georgetown, the Jesuit diplomatic school. This school is directed by the famous Jesuit Father Walsh, a geopolitician of the school of General Haushoffer, the former Hitlerist theorist. . . . The entire Hearst and Script Howard press today has a Catholic bias. It is surprising that Europe should not have realized that the evolution of American policy reflects the machinations of the Jesuits, who attack everyone who opposes them...."

Indeed, this was made clear, when the Congress Committee on Un-American Activities—in fact, a branch of Catholic Action—started its inquisitorial check, not only on the behaviour of the citizens but even on their beliefs, at the instigation of the famous Senator McCarthy. McCarthy himself was inspired by the German-American Jesuit Father Walsh, as Jacques Derogy[3] has pointed out:

"It was barely a month", he says, "since McCarthy had confided his ambitions to that ecclesiastic known in American Catholic circles for his perigrinations and, in particular, for the missions entrusted to him by the Pope—Dean of the School of Political Science of the University of Georgetown, the nursery of American diplomacy; propagandist for German geopolitics. . . . The Jesuit Father Walsh had become the keeper of this young Catholic senator's conscience and was to play a big role in his career."

Finally, after many scandals and many revelations of the poor moral quality of the accusers who gave evidence, the Commission shook off the yoke of the Jesuits and brought more justice and more restraint into the inquiries, which up to that time had recalled, in their intolerance and disregard for equity, the all too well-known Inquisition.

But it would be unwise to attach too much importance and significance for the future to this slight reaction of Congress against the encroachments of Catholic Action. There would be more point

[3]Le grand veneur de la chaise aux sorcieres (Liberation. 29 March 1954).

in listening to Frederic Hoffet's[4] warning:

"Mgr. Spellman, Archbishop of New York, and personal friend of Pius XII, with whom the latter draws up his American policy. . . . Refusing to be embarrassed by her own doctrines, or by those of her adversaries whose help she knows how to compel while concealing her real aims, the Roman Church is today playing the Protestant game . . . and all this very quietly: when she wants to, the Roman Church knows how to appear humble, even to the extent of keeping her name out of things."

We ourselves have written in an earlier book:[5]

"The Vatican knows human weaknesses very well—it has lived on them for so long! That of homo americanus has not escaped it, you may be sure. Availing itself of its spiritual ascendancy over all Catholic countries, flashing this power like a great mirror in the eyes of anyone to whom it can be of advantage, will it succeed in hypnotizing this American man, as it hypnotized homo germanicus ? Will this people, untamed until a short time ago, be the last steed mounted by the Papacy, which has already ridden to death so many frisky chargers in its fantastic ride which has lasted for seventeen centuries?"

Let us hope all the same that the citizens of America will be able to make a timely assessment of the peril that too intimate a 'flirtation' with the Vatican would entail for their free institutions.

Let us hope finally that in the United States, as well as in Europe, due weight will be given to this judicious reflection of Ralph Barton Perry's,[6] which is at the same time a warning:

"The democracies seem always to be warming their enemies in their own bosoms and in this way helping on their own destruction."

[4]L'Equivoque catholique (Fischbacher, Paris 1957, p. 235 et seq.).
[5]Le Vatican contre la France (Fischbacher, Paris 1957, pp. 274 and 275).
[6]Puritanisme et democratie (Robert Laffont, Paris 1952, pp. 619 and 620).

Part Three

GERMAN AGGRESSIONS

THE ELECTION OF PIUS XII AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR

CHAPTER I

THE ANSCHLUSS AND CARDINAL INNITZER

THE reactionary politics of the Austrian clergy prepares the ground for Nazism. — Mgr. Seipel, Jesuit, or the "merciless cardinal chancellor". — The democratic resistance stifled in blood. — Synchronism of the German and Austrian concordats. — Assassination of Chancellor Dollfuss by order of Hitler. — His successor, the devout Schuschnigg, outwitted by Franz von Papen, the Pope's chamberlain. — The Berchtesgaden trap: the Nazi Seyss Inquart imposed as Minister of the Austrian State Security Force, to paralyse the regime. — German ultimatum on 10 March 1938. Seyss-Inquart heads the Government. Entry of German troops into Austria on 12 March. — Eight million Austrian Catholics thus join the Reich. — Enthusiastic attitude of Cardinal Innitzer and of the Austrian Episcopate: "The priests and their flock will unreservedly follow the great German State and its Fuhrer. . . . Und, heil Hitler!". — Mercure de France writes: ". . . it is the Holy See that has laid down a line of conduct and they merely followed it." — The Pope, civilization's last autocrat.

"The Catholic Church will give Germany all the moral support she is capable of."

Statement by Mgr. Orsenigo to Herr von Ribbentrop,
Minister of Foreign Affairs.

"God wants the Anschluss."

FRANZ VON PAPEN,
(11 March 1938)

IT must be remembered that, by a truly "providential" synchronization, just as Mussolini was seizing power in Italy thanks to don Sturzo. Chief of the Catholic Party, Mgr. Seipel, a Jesuit, became Chancellor of Austria. He occupied this position until 1929, with a two-year inter-regnum, and it was during these decisive years that he set the internal politics of Austria on the reactionary and clerical path along which his successors followed him—a path that was to lead to the country's absorption into the German bloc.

The merciless cardinal

The correspondent of the Times in Vienna, G. E. R. Gedye,[1] writes:

"The Chancellor, Mgr. Seipel, was slowly playing a subtle and well-thought-out game. . . . Mgr. Seipel had such good cards in his hand; they were not numerous, but were played with redoubtable dexterity. ... He was playing a double game, and his insistence on introducing foreign capital into his country was only the first half of a manoeuvre whose second was . . . the anti-Socialist policy with which Seipel's successors triumphed in 1934; and it was this policy which, in destroying Austrian democracy, cleared the way along which Nazism had but to march its goose-step.

"The Seipel Government's tremendous analytical error, the mistake which, by one repetition after another, destroyed every ounce of Austrian resistance to Nazism, was bearing its first fruits. The bloody 'Fifteenth of July' (1927) was beginning. Henceforth the Chancellor-Prelate was to be known by the nickname of 'Keine Milde (Cardinal' (Merciless Cardinal). It was the Right's first blow

[1]Suicide de l'Autriche (Union latine d'editions, Paris 1940, pp. 32. 41, 51, 55 and 57).

to the Social Democrats, the first public declaration of the Fascist organization of the Heimwehr....

"Seipel had industriously laid his underground mines. Up to 1929, he manoeuvred to exclude the Socialists from the government and to form a right-wing cartel, with the help of the 'Christian Socialists' and of the pan-Germanists, who later became the Nazi Party.

"Mgr. Seipel's was a militant soul. This great statesman was a visionary and a believer. All he lacked was a heart. . . .

"15 July 1927 may be considered as the first of the four dates which marked the successive stages of the fall of Austrian independence; the three others being the suppression of Parliament by Dollfuss in March 1933, and the two 'Twelfths of February', that of the counter-revolution of 1934 and that of the interview at Berchtesgaden in 1938....

"Seipel has always struck me as a being from a spaceless and timeless world . . . every one of his features seemed to belong to one or other cardinal or minister of the days of absolute monarchy. . . . Looking back, it is obvious that in 1938 Austria paid the price of the clerical brand which Seipel left upon her, and which Dollfuss and Schuschnigg made indelible. . . ."

Joseph Rovan,[2] a Catholic writer, wrote as follows about the situation in Austria a few years before the Anschluss:

"The government of Mgr. Seipel, which was still a parliamentary government, had left some resentment behind it; corporate dictatorship and hatred. Popular resistance had been destroyed. . . ."

The author defines the 'corporate state' thus:

". . . The Austrian corporate State governed by Catholics who. inspired by Franz von Papen, had thought that they could respect both the spirit of the times and the foundation of the Catholic concept of society by doing away with the institutions and ideas of liberal parliamentary democracy. . . . In the field of anti-Semitism, the Austrian Christian Socialists did not consider they needed any lessons from their former compatriot (Hitler). The guns directed against the workmen's quarters in 1934 had revealed, among those responsible for a system built upon anti-modernist resentment, a

[2]Le catholicisme politique en Allemagne (Editions du Seuil, Paris 1956, pp. 239 and 238).

desire to annihilate popular liberties which was no less implacable than that of the Nazi chiefs. . . ."

Chancellor Dollfuss had come into power in 1932. On 5 June 1933 he was signing a Concordat with the Vatican.

On 25 July 1934 Chancellor Dollfus was assassinated by an Austrian Nazi. Hitler, believed to be the instigator of the crime, praised the murderer.

Kurt von Schuschnigg succeeded Dollfus.

In 1936, Hitler appointed Franz von Papen Ambassador at Vienna.

The Pope's chamberlain

Mr. Gedye[3] tells us that:

"From the beginning of May (1936), von Papen entered into secret negotiations, attacking Dr. Schuschnigg at his weak spot: he pointed out to him the advantages, from the point of view of the Vatican's interests, of a reconciliation with Hitler. The argument may sound odd, but Schuschnigg was devout, and von Papen was the Pope's chamberlain.

"In Rome, at the end of April, Schuschnigg could see that he was no more than a pawn in a game where something quite different from Austrian independence was at stake."

This game was the supreme assault that the dictators whom the Pope had made were preparing against the democratic nations.

"In April 1937", writes Franz von Papen,[4] "Goering paid an official visit to the Duce in Rome. . . . The official reason for this was the situation created by the Spanish war, but, in fact, his conversations with Mussolini soon turned in the direction of Germano-Italian relations. Goering remarked that the Anschluss should not provoke any conflict between Berlin and Rome. . . ."

The pious fox adds, a little further on, with an air of injured innocence: "At the Nuremberg trials, I was to be reproached with having enticed Schuschnigg into a trap, so that Hitler should be able to make abusive demands, demands I was supposed to know about long before the interview."

Mr. Gedye[5] has described what happened, and it is easy to

[3]Op. cit., pp. 188 et seq.
[4]Memoires (Flammarion. Paris 1953. pp. 264 and 275).
[5]Op. cit.. pp. 204 et seq.

recognize in the manoeuvre he relates the "way of working" of the master knave:[6]

"Von Papen went to the young Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria, Guido Schmidt, in order to be sure of his help in drawing Chancellor Schuschnigg into the Berchtesgaden trap. . . . Guido Schmidt therefore took von Papen to Schuschnigg. explaining that he had a friendly and very important proposition to make to him on behalf of the Fuhrer. . . .

"Schuschnigg knew, better than anyone, von Papen's reputation of intriguer and cheat. ... By himself, he could not have deceived Schuschnigg, but the latter's fully justified suspicions fell under the insistence of his good friend Guido Schmidt. . . . On Saturday, 12 February 1938, Kurt von Schuschnigg, Chancellor-Dictator of Austria, crossed the Rubicon, which on the map bears the name of Salzach. . . . How many times must the unsuccessful Austrian painter (Hitler)—that out-of-work starveling of the Viennese doss-houses—have dreamed of the day when he would impose his will on the country that had rejected him. . . ."

Walter Gorlitz and Herbert A. Quint[7] have related this historic-interview and the sequel that was—with what rapidity!—to follow:

The designs of Providence

"On 12 February 1938, Schuschnigg paid his first secret visit to the Berghof. . . . Hitler spoke to him in the most brutal fashion. Providence, he declared, had entrusted him, Hitler, with a mission. . . . The Berchtesgaden agreement (between Hitler and Schuschnigg) came into force on 15 February 1938. The introduction of Seyss-Inquart (as Minister of Security) in the Schuschnigg government paralysed the entire regime. The pan-Germanist politicians, clerical and conservative, with von Papen himself, were making ready for Hitler's arrival in Vienna. . . .

"On 11 March 1938, Schuschnigg resigned. . . . Seyss-inquart's government was formed, with Ernst Kaltenbrunner, chief of the Austrian SS. as Minister of the State Security Force, and Hueber.

[6]It will be recalled that Franz von Papen. who raised Hitler to power and was the great architect of the Anschluss, was later acquitted at the Nuremberg trials. Nevertheless, the (German) denazification tribunal of the same town condemned him on 14 February 1947 to eight years' hard labour. But the chamberlain of His Holiness was clandestinely liberated shortly afterwards (AUTHOR'S NOTE).

[7]Adolf Hitler (Amiot-Dumont, Paris 1953. pp. 124 to 131)

Goering's brother-in-law, as Minister of Justice. . . . German troops entered Austria on 12 March. . . . The Seyss-Inquart government proclaimed the reunion of Austria and Germany. . . . Hitler addressed the crowds from the balcony of the Rathaus (Vienna), and spoke of the plans of Providence. . . . Prince Philip of Hesse telephoned from Rome during the evening. Mussolini had accepted Hitler's message, and recognized the reunion of Austria with the Reich. . . .

"On 10 April, a plebiscite took place: 4,200,000 Austrians approved the union, only 10,000 declaring themselves against it. . . .

"From 3 to 9 May 1938, Hitler was the guest of King Victor Emmanuel III, and he met Mussolini. The reception was triumphal."

An enigma . . .

"It has been said", Jacques Bardoux,[8] Member of the Institute, tells us, "that, although Mussolini might have encouraged Hitler to bring about the Anschluss, he had not foreseen such a complete and rapid annexation. . . . The Italian objective had not varied since the peace had been signed: it was to prevent Austria from finding, either by the restoration of the Habsburgs or by the formation of a customs union, strength enough to enable her to exert on the Brenner a pressure that might be dangerous to Italian supremacy in the Adriatic as well as to the weak salient formed by the Dalmatian frontier.

"On 20 May 1925, Mussolini declared to the Senate: 'It is not sufficient to guarantee the Rhine frontier: the Brenner frontier must also be guaranteed. . . . Italy would never tolerate that obvious violation of treaties, which the annexation of Austria to Germany would imply. That annexation would annihilate the effects of the Italian victory. It would increase demographic and territorial primacy of Germany.

"This policy—the essential condition of Italian expansion in the Balkans—was dictated by history and by the map, by past experience and by ambitions for the future. And now, here, on the Brenner frontier, in contact with Tyrolean irredenticism and within flying distance of Venice, was to be put the weight of a rigid, totalitarian,

[8]L'Ordre Nouveau (Hachette, Paris 1939. pp. 135 el seq).

over-industrialized and over-armed mass of 70 million Austro-Germans, whose war potential was growing from month to month. . . . Italy's position was more perilous than in August 1914. How is it that this forced renunciation of a secular objective, which aroused great anxiety among the Italian population, should have made no impression on official circles? . . . How can one explain this enigma?..."

The reply has been clearly given by Francois Charles-Roux,[9] then Ambassador of France to the Vatican. He also notes the opposition of German and Italian interests in this affair, but at the same time he expresses the fear that on this capital question Mussolini will give way to the pressure of his powerful colleague.

. . . and its explanation

"It seemed to me possible", writes the Ambassador, "that Mussolini might drop Austria, and abandon her to Germany, recognizing the Anschluss in exchange for some advantage or concession granted by Berlin. . . .

"We were, alas, to see the achievement of this metamorphosis. I believe that Pius XI and Cardinal Pacelli thought it possible, as I did myself. . . . Perhaps it was the fact that eight million Austrian Catholics, incorporated in the Catholic group in the Reich, would make up a single German Catholic body which would be the better able to make its weight felt. . . .

"Mussolini warned Schuschnigg that he should no longer count upon Italy to make Germany respect Austrian independence.

"On 12 March 1938, the blow fell: German troops marched into Austria:

"On 15 March, the German press published the following announcement from Cardinal Innitzer: 'The priests and their flock must give their unreserved support to the great German State and to the Fuhrer, whose struggle for the power, the honour and the prosperity of Germany, corresponds with the will of Providence.'

"A facsimile of this declaration was reproduced in the newspapers, so that there should be no doubt as to its authenticity. The facsimile was posted on the walls of Vienna and of other Austrian towns.

[9]Op. cit.. pp. 114, 118 and 122.

Above his signature Cardinal Innitzer had written in his own hand: 'Und heil Hitler!'

"Three days later, there appeared a pastoral letter, addressed by the entire Austrian Episcopate to the members of the dioceses; the Italian newspapers published the text on 28 March: it was a contemptible acceptance of the Nazi regime and a hymn to its glory."

Cardinal Innitzer's pastoral letter

According to Mr. Ernest Pezet,[10] Cardinal Innitzer said in his pastoral letter: "The Fiihrer received me. Here are my instructions to the Catholic priests: The priests and their faithful shall unreservedly follow the Great German State and its Fiihrer, for their struggle to give power and honour to the Reich and unity to the German people has clearly been blessed by Providence. I invite the chiefs of the youth organizations to take steps towards a union with the organizations of the German Reich...."

Racism

"If we are to believe Cardinal Innitzer, Goebbels and Rosenberg", writes Pezet, a little further on, "was it not God Himself who entrusted the Fiihrer with the mission of bringing about the reign of Germanic peace and the preservation of honour—if necessary at the point of the sword?"

And this same Cardinal Innitzer dares to speak of Rosenberg—
the champion of the racist doctrine, as:
"That unexpected agent of Providence!"
The Mercure de France[11] drew the logical conclusion:
"We are much moved—not to say scandalized—by the attitude of the Austrian Episcopate towards the Fiihrer. . . . But it was not the bishops who took a decision that involves the entire Church: it is the Holy See that has laid down a line of conduct and they merely followed it."

Indeed, it cannot be overemphasized that the Catholic hierarchy is subject to the absolute will of the Sovereign Pontiff, the last surviving autocrat of the civilized world. No ecclesiastic, for example,

[10]L'Autriche et la paix (Editions Self, Paris 1945, pp. 149, 171).
[11]L'Autriche catholique et Hitler (1 May 1938, pp. 719 and 720).

can seek a public office or stand for parliament without the Holy See's formal authorization, and this is what must be remembered with regard to the Catholic party chiefs whose vote was decisive in enthroning the dictators: don Sturzo in Italy and Mgr. Kaas in Germany. If one adds to these the prelates who became chiefs of government, as did Mgr. Seipel in Austria and Mgr. Tiso in Slovakia, or who enjoyed a profound influence over the State, such as Mgr. Stepinac in Croatia, it is possible to assess the true value of the oft-repeated assertion: "The Roman Church is not concerned with politics".

It would be truer to say that its policy is a one-way policy, whatever the country involved: "It then becomes easier to understand the English author F. A. Ridley, who complains that Pius XI's policy was everywhere too much in favour of Fascist movements. By collaborating, said Cardinal Suhard, Archbishop of Paris, he was only following in the footsteps of Pius XI, 'it was a question of ensuring the freedom of the Church's beneficent mission'." "This", observes J. Tchernoff,[12] "is how the Austrian bishops argued."

The Roman Church carried out this "beneficent mission" for months and years to come, by helping in every "coup de force' and by having a hand in every crime.

[12]Les demagogies contre les democraties (R. Pichon et R. Durand-Angias, Paris 1947, pp. 80 and 81).

CHAPTER II

FROM MUNICH TO MGR. TISO'S SLOVAKIA

"ONCE the road to Vienna is free, the road to Prague will not be barred for long". — IXth Congress of the Nazi Party at Nuremberg. The emblems of the Germanic Holy Roman Empire. — The Czech Democrats and Slovak vassals oppose the Vatican. — The Roman Catholic Church upholds the Slovak will to "independence", that is to say submission to Germany. — The Slovak political chiefs are nearly all ecclesiastics. — The priest Hlinka and his guard modelled after the SA. Mgr. Tiso, Privy Chamberlain of the Pope and pro-Hitlerist prelate. — The Vatican does not want a concordat with the Czechoslovak Republic: she will wait for Hitler to dismember it. — Munich and the annexation of the Sudetes by the Reich. — German threats to the rest of the country. — Pius XI refuses to intervene in favour of peace: "It would be useless, superfluous and inopportune". — Tension grows. Mgr. Tiso in Berlin at Hitler's request. — 14 March 1939: proclamation of the puppet Republic of a Slovakia enfeoffed to Germany with Mgr. Tiso at its head. The Vatican's silence. — Cardinal Pacelli, former Nuncio at Berlin, succeeds Pius XI on 12 March under the name of Pius XII. — Mgr. Tiso wants to "set up Slovakia according to a Christian plan". "Catholicism and Nazism", he says, "have much in common and they work hand in hand to reform the world." Consequently, he persecutes the Protestants and deports the Jews. This Catholic prelate, hanged at the Liberation, was the first supplier to Auschwitz.

"Catholicism and Nazism have much in common
and they work hand in hand to reform the world."
MGR. TISO.

THE era of conquests had now begun for the Reich.

The rape of Austria was to be followed, a year later, by that of Czechoslovakia. Indeed, as Mr. Ernest Pezet then wrote: "Once the road to Vienna is free, the road to Prague will not be barred for long".

Franz von Papen, the Pope's Privy Chamberlain, deals in his Memoires[1] with the preparation of these two outrages:

"Nine years later, at the Nuremberg trials, we were to learn of the existence of the famous Hossbach Protocol, a report on the secret conference held, on 5 November 1937, by Hitler, Neurath and the chiefs of the three armed services. It is in this cynical and revealing document that, for the first time, war was presented as an inevitable necessity, and that the approximate dates of the military interventions in Austria and Czechoslovakia were fixed."

One cannot help admiring the reproachful tone adopted by the good apostle. According to him—who had been the great architect of the Anschluss—he knew nothing, at the time, of these warlike plans. Yet, it cannot be said that there was much mystery about them.

Emblems of the Germanic Holy Roman Empire

"The Party's IXth Congress opened at Nuremberg, in September 1938, in an atmosphere charged with electricity. Hitler had had brought from the Hofburg the emblems of the Germanic Holy Roman Empire—the crown, the sceptre, the sword, the orb. This was symbolic. . . ."[1bis]

"The Czechoslovak Republic", writes Mr. E. Wiskeman,[2] "was the thing that Hitler liked least of all: she was opposed to any form of dictatorship and governed a country where everyone could vote, write or speak as he wished."

[1]Memoires, p. 265.
[1(bis)] Gorlitz and Quint, op. cit., pp. 134 and 135.
[2]L'Axe Rome-Berlin (Payot. Paris 1950, p. 133).

La Croix,[3] on the other hand, had stressed the quite opposite character of the Slovak population:

"Everyone knows that Slovakia is a country which has remained deeply religious, a sort of Slav Bavaria or Vendee. The severe sentence on Johannes Huss at the Council of Constance will be recalled. His death at the stake in the century when Joan of Arc was to meet with the same end, has made him, in many people's eyes a kind of 'martyr' of the Czech nation. . . . For many Czechs the name of Huss is linked with a magnificent protest of the Slav soul against oppression. This is a point which lies at the heart of the country's Catholic tradition and gives religious Bohemia her tragic originality....

"The day after the Allied victory over the twin monarchy, the religious drama of Bohemia was about to enter a new phase. All traces of Austrian domination were to be swept away. . . . The name of Rome is associated with that of Vienna in order to wipe out both from the national religious life... . Hundreds of thousands of souls were escaping from Catholic unity. Disaster is in the air.

These last few lines explain admirably the decisive role that the Roman Catholic Church was again to play in entrusting a neighbouring country to the "guardianship" of the German Reich. This is how Walter Hagen[4] expresses it:

"The Slovak will to independence was supported by the Catholic Church. Since, apart from the Church, any genuine Slovak intelligentsia was to all intents and purposes non-existent, the people's party (that of the priest Hlinka Andrej) could be run only by the clergy. In addition to Hlinka, the other political chiefs of any stature, such as, for example, the future head of the State, Mgr. Tiso, were in the main ecclesiastics."

Year by year Francois Charles-Roux[5] observed this papal policy in favour of Slovak "independence", a pleasant euphemism to describe this country's entry into Germany's orbit:

"On 16 September 1936, the day after the German troops had invaded the Rhineland, Pius XI mentioned to me the Sudetenland and in a general way Czechoslovakia as being one of the directions

[3] 12 October 1947.
[4] Le front secret, p. 141.
[5] Huit ans au Vatican, pp. 124 and 125.

in which Germany wanted to expand. . . . Czechoslovakia meant less than Austria to the Vatican.

"Their relationship had started by being stormy, then for quite a long time remained shaky. . . .

". . . The settling of ecclesiastical questions that had been pending since the creation of Czechoslovakia . . . could only help the consolidation and internal cohesion of the young republic. Reciprocally, the Catholic Church's advantage lay in the enjoyment in Czechoslovakia of a definite status, which would be established by common agreement and would put an end to the provisional and the precarious. To this end, it was in its interest to take advantage of the conciliatory character of such statesmen as Masaryk and Benes. . . ."

But these conciliatory characters, according to Henriette Feuillet,[6] did not soften the ill will of the Holy See.

"Ever since the creation of the first Czechoslovak republic, the Vatican has obstinately refused to conclude a concordat, whereas the papal Curia was in a great hurry to conclude one with Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy . . . immediately after the establishment of dictatorship in these countries. . . ."

It was also with a dictator that the Holy See was relying on signing a concordat in Slovakia, and so much the better this time since the dictator was to be an ecclesiastic. Hence the Roman Curia appeared quite unhurried. It was awaiting the arrival of Mgr. Tiso.

Here is further evidence of the Vatican's attitude towards the Nazis' new and very next victim:

"From the middle of August 1936", writes Francois Charles-Roux,[7] "I had undertaken to get the Pope to speak in favour of peace—a just peace, naturally. Cardinal Pacelli transmitted the request to him. At first, I was unsuccessful. But as from the beginning of September 1938, that is to say, when the international crisis reached its culminating point, I began to receive soothing impressions at the Vatican which contrasted strangely with the rapid aggravation of the situation. ... To a new appeal by Cardinal Pacelli, transmitting my requests and those of fellow diplomats, that he should make some pronouncement, he had replied:

'It would be useless, superfluous and inopportune.'

[6]France Nouvelle, 25 June 1949.
[7]Huir ans au Vatican, pp. 127 and 128.

"I just could not understand his obstinate silence. . . ."

Francois Charles-Roux did not have to wait long for an explanation of this stubborn silence. Subsequent events were soon to enlighten him, as Ernest Pezet[8] points out:

". . . . First peripheral effects of the Austrian drama: the whole of central Europe is shaken by the annexation, as if by an earthquake. The Third Reich will now settle the account of Czechoslovakia.

"There is further agitation in German Sudetenland. . . .

"Without further delay, the agrarian Sudetes rally to the flag of the Hitlerist Henlein. ... A more serious and, to my mind, decisive fact is that the Social Christians are in turn deserting the camps of Benes and Hodza. One of their leaders, the prelate Hilgenreiner. has declared: 'We do not have to be more Catholic than Cardinal Innitzer, who knew how to be realistic. . . .'

"The 'surrender' without a fight of Cardinal Innitzer with all his theological weapons and canonical paraphernalia having thrown the Social Christians of German Bohemia into a panic, the leaders of the Social Christian Party unanimously decided to join Henlein's opposition."

While the Duce was keeping the company amused with his tomfoolery, the crucial date was drawing near. Indeed, Walter Hagen[9] writes:

"On 9 March 1939 Mgr. Tiso retired to his parish of Banovce. . . . In the night of 12 to 13 March, two representatives of the German Secret Service came to ask him to get in touch with the other Slovak leaders at Presburg in order to form, under his presidence, a new Slovak government which would at last proclaim the sovereignty of Slovakia under German protection. Mgr. Tiso acceded to this suggestion.

". . . On the morning of 13 March, Mgr. Tiso was informed that Hitler wished to see him: He immediately flew to Berlin in a special plane with Durcansky.... A German adviser in the person of 'Sturmbaumfiihrer' SS Nageler was assigned to the Hlinka guard..."

It should be noted that this Hlinka guard was the Slovak counterpart of Hitler's SA.

[8]L'Autriche et la Paix (Edition Sell, Paris 1945, pp. 146 et 147).
[9]Le Front secret (Les Iles d'Or, Paris 1950. pp. 146 and 154).

"On 14 March 1939, Hitler created the so-called Republic of Slovakia. Mgr. Tiso, whose dream it was to combine Catholicism with Nazism, was placed at its head."[10]

"Alas", remarks Camille Cianfarra,[11] "the tiara of the triple crown was barely settled on Pius XII's head when Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia. . . . The end of Czechoslovakia came as the death-knell of the policy of appeasement pursued by Chamberlain. . . . The Vatican remained silent. . . . The sudden disappearance of Czechoslovakia from the map of Europe was a complete surprise.. . . In the eyes of the Fascist Government, the latest German 'coup de force' weakened France's position still further and diminished her prestige both in the Balkans and in eastern Europe. . . ."

Thus, once more—and it was not to be the last time—the Holy See had co-operated with all its strength in a "coup de force" of the Reich. . . . What was even better, it had for this purpose put one of its prelates at Hitler's disposal. . . . "Catholicism and Nazism", declared Mgr. Tiso, "have much in common, and they work hand in hand to reform the world".[12]

Under such authority the new state was in turn to become acquainted with certain "Christian" institutions that were flourishing in the mighty protecting power.

"The period of the Tiso regime, in Slovakia, was particularly distressing for the country's Protestant Church, which comprises only one-fifth of the population. Mgr. Tiso was seeking to reduce the Protestant influence to a minimum and even to eliminate it . . . influential members of the Protestant Church were sent to concentration camps."[13]

The prelate-dictator attacked not only Protestants. He earned another glorious title: that of being the first to deport the Jews.

On this matter Henriette Feuillet[14] asks the following question:

"How did the Vatican react ? What did it do to prevent the mass assassinations of Jews in the concentration camps where they were being sent by Mgr. Tiso. who 'justified" this cruelty by asserting that 'all that we do against the Jews, we do for love of our nation. Loving one's neighbour and loving the nation have developed into a fruitful

[10]Henriette Feuillet: France Nouvelle, 25 June 1949.
[11]La guerre et le Vatican, p. 202.
[12]Henriette Feuillet: France Nouvelle. 25 June 1949.
[13]Reforme. 17 August 1947.
[14]France Nouvelle. 25 June 1949

battle against the enemies of Nazism'."

And here is the reply:

"The 'impartial' Vatican behaved towards Mgr. Tiso in a manner which corresponds to its political tendencies. In June 1940, Radio Vatican announced: 'The declaration of Mgr. Tiso, Chief of the Slovak State, asserting his intention to set up Slovakia according to a Christian plan, is greatly appreciated by the Holy See'."

On the other hand, at the Liberation, this good work met with less success amongst the Allies. Delivered by the Americans to Czechoslovakia, the worthy ecclesiastic, expert in setting up states "according to a Christian plan", was condemned to death by the Prague Tribunal in 1946 and hanged there and then.

It was doubtless the first time in history that a dignitary of the Roman Church was to be seen swinging at the end of a rope as punishment for his crimes.

But what should be said of the Holy See's "appreciation" ? Was Pius XII, who " knew nothing"—so he said—of the German atrocities, also unaware of those of his prelate? Moreover, this is not the complete list of the horrors that were perpetrated under the approving eye of the Holy Father's representatives, if not under their instructions. In this respect, it will later be seen that Mgr. Stepinac's Croatia was in no way inferior to Mgr. Tiso's Slovakia. In both these two unhappy countries, the Roman Church was incontestably all-powerful. ... It was Tiso, the chief provided by the Roman Church, who gave the signal for deportations of Jews to the death camps. Lord Russell of Liverpool,[15] who was a legal adviser in the cases of the war criminals, tells in the following terms what happened to these Jews:

"In 1941, at Auschwitz, the first contingent of Jews arrived from Slovakia and High Silesia and those who were not capable of working were immediately sent to the gas chamber in one of the rooms of the building which housed the crematorial ovens."

Thus, with all due deference to the Holy Father's apologists, the fact is well established for the edification of historians: the first supplier to Auschwitz was a Catholic prelate.

This is significant.

[15]Sous le signe de la croix gammee (L'Ami du Livre, Geneve 1955, p. 217).

CHAPTER III

THE INVASION OF POLAND

CURRICULUM vitae of the new Pope Pius XII. Revealing mask of this "black"-family descendant. Eugenio Pacelli, priest-diplomat. His career at the Congregation of Ecclesiastic Affairs (Foreign Affairs of the Vatican): under-secretary, assistant secretary, secretary. His thirteen years in Germany as Nuncio at Munich and Berlin. The concordat with Hitler: consecration of the Nazi regime. Mgr. Pacelli, Secretary of State. His election at the conclave of 1939, the "conclave of dupes" for the cheated French ministers. The so-called "leftist Pope", pro-integrist and Germanophile. — Nazi aggressions increase after the election of the Pastor Angelicus. — Poland threatened by the Reich. The Vatican pushes the Government of Warsaw into an agreement with Hitler: the incorporation of several million Poles in the Reich would swell the Catholic ranks by as many. — Hitler invades Poland. — Pius XII receives the Poles of Rome but does not condemn the Hitlerist aggression. He prefers to support the Italo-German proposal for peace on the basis of an amputated Poland. — The Catholic populations, flocks which the "pastor" uses at his pleasure. — The Poles' "deadly sin" : to have refused to submit themselves to Hitlerist demands.

"Having become Pius XII, Pacelli is seen to be an out and out pro-integrist and Germanophile. He is called the "German Pope". . . . Germany is, in his eyes, called upon to play the role of the "sword of God", of the secular arm of the Church. . . . In 1943, he refuses to condemn publicly the Nazi concentration camps."

ALEXANDRE LENOTRE.

"The Vatican is one of those mainly responsible for my country's tragedy. I realized too late that we had been pursuing our foreign policy in the sole interests of the Catholic Church."[1]

COLONEL JOSEPH BECK,
Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs
from 1932 to 1939.

ON 10 February 1939, Pius XI died, a little too early to see the outbreak of the most gigantic drama of modern times, which he had so long and so laboriously prepared by opening the road to the conquering dictatorships. On 12 March, it was the turn of his right-hand man—or rather his accursed soul—Mgr. Eugenio Pacelli, to don the tiara, and herein lies one more proof of the continuity of a Vatican policy entirely founded on German hegemony in Europe.. . .

It is not unimportant to know that Eugenio Pacelli was born of a Roman family which included many personalities from the Pontifical States and from the Curia. This readily explains the specifically ecclesiastic character of his looks. Much could be said on this subject, and the photograph here reproduced, or any other as good, is a subject of interest to the amateur of physiognomy, that neglected art. But there is no need to vie with a Porta, a Lavater or a Duchenne de Boulogne to discern the narrow link between this mask, strangely imperious and cruel, and what we know — or are about to learn — of its owner.

Georges Goyau[2] recalls his beginnings:

"Barely had Eugenio Pacelli become a priest, than the Vatican

[1]Declaration of 6 February 1940.
[2]Sa Saintete Pie XII(Plon. Paris 1939, pp. 13 et seq.).

diplomacy was claiming his services: the Congregation of Extra-ordinary Ecclesiastic Affairs received him as probationer in its Diplomatic Section. Mgr. Gasparri was Secretary to that congregation. He did not want young Father Pacelli who, already in 1904. as Privy Chamberlain, bore the title of 'Monseigneur', and who was. from 1905 onwards, 'Prelate to His Holiness'—to be deterred from his professional task by any other occupation.

"And, step by step, he became Under-Secretary, Assistant Secretary, then Secretary of the Congregation. Cardinal Merry del Val, Pius X's Secretary of State, followed the young prelate's ascent with watchful benevolence. . ."

We shall not revert to his thirteen-year stay in Germany as Apostolic Nuncio at Munich and Berlin, nor to the concordat concluded with Hitler in 1933. It is well enough known that here was the focal point of many events that were to disrupt Europe—or. if one prefers another picture, the bomb that was to explode a few years later.

"Never will the spiritual have more openly declared that it was to march in the service of the temporal", wrote Charles Maurras in Action Francaise, on 26 July 1933, the day after the Concordat had been signed between Hitler's Germany and the Holy See. by Franz von Papen and Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli.

Now back in Rome, the happy negotiator was climbing — it may be said—the first step of the pontifical throne, as Charles Pichon[3] has pointed out:

"Pius XI has prepared his own succession far in advance by taking for his Secretary of State Cardinal Pacelli (the descendant of an ancient 'black' family), after the latter had spent many years as Nuncio at Munich and Berlin."

Pius XT thus died on 10 February 1939, on the eve of the second world war. As Camille Cianfarra[4] has written:

"On 16 February 1939 . . . von Bergen, Ambassador of Germany to the Vatican, pronounced before the Holy College of Cardinals, the address of condoleances required by the death of the Pope. . . . 'This is one of the most decisive hours of history', declared von Bergen to the forty cardinals assembled in the Vatican's vast con-

[3] Histoire du Vatican (Sefi, Paris 1946. p. 161).
[4] La guerre et le Vatican, pp. 21 and 22.

sistory. 'We are witnessing the elaboration of a new world seeking to disengage itself from the ruins of a past which, in many cases, has no reason to subsist . . . and the Papacy has, without doubt, an essential role to play in the circumstances. It weighs upon the Holy College, at the moment, we are certain, to have the very delicate responsibility of choosing a worthy successor to Pius XI. . . .'

"Stripped of its diplomatic phraseology, von Bergen s speech represented Germany's demand that the cardinals should choose a Pope favourable to Hitler's expansionist programme. . . ."

Francois Charles-Roux,[5] for his part, writes:

"Cardinal Pacelli had in his favour the generals superior of the great religious orders: that of the Jesuits, Ledochowski; that of the Benedictines, the German Stotzingen. . . ."

What Charles-Roux has to add might appear even stranger, if it were forgotten how many a prelate, supposedly French, and especially the following, behaved during the German occupation:

"What followed of my conversation with Cardinal Baudrillart proved to me that he was for Cardinal Pacelli. . . ."

In fact, the candidate of the late Pius XI and of the "black pope" von Ledochowski was everybody's friend. The key to this enigma is given us by Alexandre Lenotre:[6]

"During the entire inter-war period, Rome's foreign policy, more and more directly inspired by the Jesuits, is in almost all fields opposed to Paris. Indeed, the Vatican thoroughly supports the wars of Italian Fascism against Ethiopia and Republican Spain. . . .

"In 1937, however, a strange campaign develops around the personality of the Pontifical Legate Pacelli, on official mission at Lisieux. The negotiator of the 1933 concordat with Hitler is presented not only as 'a great friend of France' but as 'a leftist'. . . . His election, once achieved, is represented as a success for France. In fact, it is a disaster. The 1939 conclave is the conclave of dupes for the French ministers who were magnificently cheated by the General of the Jesuits Ledochowski. . . .

"Having become Pius XII, Pacelli is seen to be an out and out pro-integrist and Germanophile. He is called the 'German Pope', His entourage, his confessor, arc German. In his eyes Germany is called

[5]Huit arts au Vatican, p. 273.
[6]Rome el la France (Liberation, 13 May 1957).

upon to play the role of the 'sword of God', of the Church's secular arm. And his entire policy will aim at making this 'powerful and disciplined' country with no laic tradition, the great continental Catholic rampart for which Rome has, ever since Otto the Great and the Germanic Holy Roman Empire, a heart-rending nostalgia.

"In 1939, Pius XII tries to negotiate with the American diplomats Sumner Welles and Myron Taylor a stalemate peace in favour of Germany. In 1943, he refuses to condemn publicly the Nazi concentration camps...."

Unfortunately, the increasing Nazi aggressions did not justify the hopes that had been placed in the Pastor Angelicus. Once again, it is Francois Charles-Roux[7] who tells us so:

"Ever since Pius XII's accession, the situation in Europe and in the world at large had become so serious, that war could be considered more probable than the maintenance of peace. . . . German troops were entering Poland in the very month that Pius XII was crowned.... In eastern Europe, Hitler was at grips with Poland and setting the problem of Danzig, behind which was looming that of the corridor. . . . Italy was throwing herself upon Albania to absorb her. . . .

"On 22 May 1939, at Berlin was signed the treaty of military alliance between Germany and Italy, which was given the spectacular name of 'The Steel Pact'...."

This brings us to the ineluctable issue. The dupes of Munich are about to pay for their serious mistakes. Hitler, obviously, had never intended to keep his word; pushed to extremes, the English and the French will retaliate this time; the catastrophe is imminent—but Pius XII utters not a word.

Everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds: events follow one another as foreseen, and the evils are set loose in accordance with pre-established plans.

Whose turn next ?

"The European chancelleries", writes C. Cianfarra,[8] "were still echoing the cries of anguish of the Czech people mourning their independence, when, towards the end of March (1939), Hitler

[7] Huit ans au Vatican, pp. 310, 314, and 318.
[8] La guerre et le Vatican, pp. 221. 222, 224 et seq

addressed to the Polish Government a note claiming the return of Danzig to the Reich. . . . Now convinced that the Fuhrer's promises were as ephemeral as snow in the sun, Chamberlain resolved to show, with all the clarity desirable, Great Britain's determination to put an end to the aggressions of the Axis. He concluded a pact of mutual aid with Joseph Beck, Polish Prime Minister, thus signifying to the German dictator that any attack against Warsaw would automatically entail a war with Great Britain as well as with France, which had just adopted an identical position. . . .

"It is but fair to add that the British Premier sent the same warning to Mussolini as to Hitler, while extending to numerous European nations, including Yugoslavia and Greece, the unilateral guarantee of British intervention, should their frontiers ever be threatened. . . .

"In an inflammatory speech delivered on 28 April, Hitler did not content himself with renewing his demands upon Poland, but simultaneously denounced three treaties: the Germano-Polish pact of non-aggression of 1934; the Anglo-German naval agreement of 1935; and the advisory pact concluded with Chamberlain at Munich in September 1938. . . ."

The same author shows with what perfect sang-froid the Vatican considered the German threat on Poland:

"The Vatican Secretariat of State was daily receiving scores of telegrams and many telephonic communications from all parts. All were in agreement in predicting that Germany was determined in its plan to proceed to the annexation of Danzig, and Poland to oppose it with every means available to it. . . . The Apostolic Nuncio at Berlin, Monsignor Cesaro Orsenigo held out little hope of an armed conflict between Warsaw and Berlin being avoided. . . . Monsignor Filippo Cortesi, Apostolic Nuncio at Warsaw, reported that the Polish Government, remembering the tragic fate suffered by Czechoslovakia after the Munich agreements, was desperately refusing to study Germany's demands.

"On 13 June 1939, President Ignaz Mosciki received in Warsaw Monsignor Cortesi, bearer of a message from the Pope. . . . Cortesi urged the Polish President to negotiate directly with Hitler. ..."

It may seem strange at first, to the uninitiated, that the Holy Father should have thus taken Hitler's part against Catholic Poland. But, in the circumstances, it was precisely its belonging to the

Roman Church that was against this poor country. Its case was exactly the same as that of Austria a year earlier, and it is fitting here to recall how F. Charles-Roux[9] explains the Vatican's being in favour of the Anschluss:

"It was that perhaps eight million Austrian Catholics, together with the Reich Catholics, would constitute a German Catholic mass better able to make its weight felt...."

Indeed, the reason is a good one, and it applies to Poland as much, and even more, than to Austria, for if the latter represented eight million Catholics, Poland counted twenty-five million.

Also one cannot help being amused, despite the tragic aspect of the circumstances, at what Mgr. Cristiani[10] has since written on the Pope's attitude at that time:

"The Holy See, in the person of Pius XII, was aspiring to express the very depths of human conscience. It was then that one could see what the Vatican's policy means. . . ."

This was very clearly seen, indeed. The Vatican took care not to utter the slightest protest when Hitler went into action and invaded the country with forces so very superior that all v/as over within a few weeks, despite the heroic defence opposed by the Poles.

"On 23 September 1939", writes F. Charles-Roux,[11] "Mussolini delivered a speech which began with these words: 'liquidata la Polonia'—Poland is liquidated. . . . On 30 September, there took place, at Castel-Gandolfo, the combined audience of the Poles of Rome, both laymen and ecclesiastics. At their head were Cardinal Hlond, the Polish Ambassador and Mr. Pappee. . . . Pius XII preferred to be the only one to speak. In his speech he avoided politics, but he did not grudge his listeners the expression of his compassion. . . . The Poles were disappointed. They were disappointed because they had come to the pontifical audience expecting precisely a direct and personal protest by the Pope against the Germans. This protest had not been explicit. Their disappointment leaked out.

Once again, Catholics had been treated by their "shepherd" like a flock which is shamelessly traded according to the interest of the

[9]Huit ans au Vatican, p. 114.
[10]Le Vatican politique (Les Editions du Centurion, Paris 1957. p. 165) Nihil obstat. 19 April 1956. Imprimatur, 15 June 1956.
[11]Huit ans au Vatican, pp. 344 et seq.

moment.

"Vatican diplomacy", Frederic Hoffet[12] has so excellently said, "is the perfect expression of pure politics, of politics freed of all ideological prejudice and of all sentimental affection.""

Yet the Holy Father did not confine himself to this passive, or perhaps one should say, tacitly approving, attitude. He soon discarded it. Father Duclos[13] will tell us how:

"Pius XII... prefers exclusively to promote a 'just and honourable peace'. ... Is it a 'just and honourable peace' that Hitler seeks in the West, to confirm his conquests? Solicited by Hitler, Mussolini associates himself with his first 'soundings for peace'.

"In the second half of September 1939 II Popolo d'Italia published a series of editorial articles, urging Great Britain and France to accept a peace of compromise, on the basis of an amputated Poland.

"Ciano begs the Nuncio transmit to the Pope a request, addressed to him by the Duce, to exert his influence in London and Paris to facilitate these peace overtures. . . . Pius XII does not refuse his good offices....

"At the end of 1939 and the beginning of 1940, the Vatican accepts, at the request of the political and military circles of the Reich, to transmit, through official channels, several requests to the Allies concerning their war aims and their peace conditions . . . during his long interview with Pius XII, on 11 March 1940, von Ribbentrop submits an offer of peace comprising eleven points, a veritable German seizure of Europe. . . . London coldly rejects it. ..."

Camille Cianfarra[14] describes this intervention in his book:

"The famous 'peace offensive', started by Hitler and Mussolini immediately after the collapse of Poland, aroused considerable interest at the Vatican. . . . Ciano received Mgr. Borgongini Duca at the Palace of Chigi and begged him to transmit to the Sovereign Pontiff the request that Mussolini was making of him to use his influence in London and Paris in favour of these peace overtures. It was soon realized that Pius XII was doing his best to further the Duce's efforts in this field. On 22 September 1939, for example, the 'Osservatore Romano' reproduced an article by 'Il Popolo d'Italia' urging England and France to accept a peace of compromise on the

[12] L'equivoque catholique (Fischbacher, Paris 1956, p. 88).
[13] Le Vatican el la seconde guerre mondiale, pp. 121 and 122.
[14] La guerre et le Vatican, pp. 259 and 260.

basis of a new Poland of reduced dimensions. . . .

"London and Paris replied that their pact with Poland prevented them from concluding any separate peace. . . ."

These efforts, exerted by Pius XII to have Paris and London back the enslavement of his dear Poles, correspond well with his attitude when they are finally liberated.

The Holy See obstinately refused to recognize the new Polish-German frontier:[15]

"The Adenauer Government and the German revisionists, in their campaigns for the 'recuperation of the provinces beyond the Oder-Neisse line', are resorting to the argument that the dioceses of these territories are only provisionally administered by members of the Polish clergy, the Vatican refusing to recognize the definitive character of the change of frontiers."

Let us recall the skilful camouflage under which the Vatican's thurifers presented the interview of 11 March 1940 between Pius XII and von Ribbentrop.

A highly edifying version for the Allies was invented in the lobbies of the Holy See, and abundantly spread throughout the press. This is it, described by Charles Pichon:[16]

"On 11 March 1940, the Reich Minister of Foreign Affairs was received by the Pope. ... An extraordinary interview, in which the Nazi, following his master's methods, thought fit to hold forth at length . . . but then, the Pope, drawing towards him a voluminous file, started to enumerate with cold severity all the facts, places, dates and detailed circumstances, duly attested by the ecclesiastical authority, of the tortures that the invader had already imposed upon the Polish people. What could be said in reply? The visitor soon took his leave and went down, as is customary, to the Cardinal Secretary of State: there he found the same icy protocol, the same nightmarish files."

Mr. Nazareno Padellaro[17] in turn writes:

"On 11 March (1940) von Ribbentrop came to Italy. The German minister's journey had been kept secret until the very last moment. . . . Everything went wrong with the Pope. At that time, there was a rumour in Rome—and it was never denied—that Ribbentrop, as a

[15]Liberation, 7 June 1952.
[16]Histoire du Vatican, pp. 180 and 181.
[17]Pie XII, p. 298

result of his interview with the Sovereign Pontiff, fainted and that he recovered on a chair which Cardinal Maglione had offered him."

Thus, in the Allied camp, good Catholics could believe that if Pius XII was abstaining from publicly stigmatizing the German atrocities, he was doing it at least privately with the Fiihrer's representatives.

But time, which puts everything in its place, was to refute this insidious fable. Already, Father Duclos, in relating the "long interview" between Pius XII and Ribbentrop, was reducing to nought this invention of a precipitated departure of the Hitlerist minister, described by Mr. Pichon in his book. But the definitive and irretrievable refutation was to come from a better source, from a strictly official document,[18] Ribbentrop's own report to his master:

"After the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Reich had transmitted the Fiihrer's compliments, the Pope opened the interview by recalling his seventeen years of activity in Germany. He said that those years passed within the orbit of German culture certainly constituted the most pleasant period of his life, and that the Government of the Reich could he assured that his heart beat, and always would, for Germany."

This is a far cry from the terrible scene completely invented for the worthy flock. One among the many other Vatican impostures constantly encountered throughout this book.

[18] 11 March 1940: extract of the report on the conversation between von Ribbentrop and Pius XII (Secret archives of the Wilhelmstrasse, RAM, 10 A).

CHAPTER IV

THE BETRAYAL OF FRANCE

THE inter-war period. The Federation nationale catholique wants to restore France's "spiritual values". — The cult of dictators and preparation for the defeat. — The work of the "Fifth Column". — Gustave Herve writes in 1935: "It is Petain we need". — A study of Philippe Petain. The puppet Marshall of the Vatican. — After Montoire's interview, La Croix writes: "We have many sins to atone for. . . the time has come to do so with tears and with blood . . .". — The Episcopate enthusiastically supports the regime arising from defeat. Anthology of clerical collaboration. — Cardinal Baudrillart, pioneer of the Franco-German entente and Recruiter No. 1 of the Legion des Volontaires francais (L.V.F.). — After the Liberation, the Church of France is purged: out of thirty bishops, only three are recalled to Rome. — In 1936, Canon Coube had inside information: "Saint Theresa" and the "just and holy" wars. — No peace for the impious. — Non est pax impiis.

> "Is there not a Hitlerist mystique fanaticizing Germany by causing her to visualize a future of revenge and world supremacy ? Is there not a Fascist mystique revivifying Italy for a war of expansion and splendour ? Who would dare to say, in view of their far-reaching effects, that these ideas are mere dreams ? No! these are ideas of light and strength. They rouse and govern the world. It is, in the end, a storm of glory, love and anger that creates epics. . ."[1]
>
> CANON COUBE.

> "Do you really understand what I want to say, Your Excellencies, Eminences and Reverences? Having placed your prestige and your monies under Hitler's protection, do you still believe that you will save them by virtue of certain privileges which you pride yourself on defending ? We shall refuse you asylum, we shall throw vou on to the parvis, to be delivered to the executioners." GEORGES BERNANOS.

> "The soldiers of the L.V.F. are contributing towards the preparation of the nation s great rebirth. Today, now that Mr. Doriot is gone, we can but admire his deeds and hold them up as an example."
>
> CARDINAL BAUDRILLART,
> (L'Emancipation Nationale, 12 December 1941).

HUMILIATED though it may have been by its defeat—an undeserved defeat—the people of France resisted the invader. Alongside its allies or in the Resistance, they heroically fought him and, on V-day, drove him from their frontiers.

One man there was who, during these years of woe, symbolized in the eyes of the world the true spirit of his country. General Charles de Gaulle refused to accept defeat and, rallying together the scattered patriots, rose up as a true saviour of France.

[1]Sainte Therese de l'Enfant Jesus et les crises du temps present (Ernest Flammarion, Paris 1936. pp. 25 and 26). Nihil Obstat, 9 January 1936. Imprimatur, 11 January 1936. (This shows that popism and fascism are but two sides of the same medal—AUTHOR'S NOTE.)

But what is to be said of those who held out their hand to the enemy? Of those eminent personalities who were weak enough to succumb to the pernicious influence of Rome ?

To understand how such surrender was possible, it is necessary first to recall the political atmosphere in France during the inter-war years. Encouraged, exalted even, by the spectacular success of the dictators in Italy and beyond the Rhine, the Reaction was burning to follow their example. The Vatican, of course, was strongly supporting this, under guise of restoring those famous "spiritual values" which go so well with the basest temporal interests.

Thus the "Federation Nationale Catholique" came into being, destined to restore France to the bosom of the Church by extirpating her "heresies": religious tolerance, the desire for liberty and for justice and social progress.

This movement, according to Father Janvier, comprised three million members, and care had been taken to bestow the presidency upon a highly respected personality: General de Castelnau.

Concerning this movement, Georges Viance[2] writes:

"A crusade! This was the only word to describe the extent of the movement. ... If they were not all shouting: It is the will of God! at least they were all chanting the Credo on the public square. . . .

" Everything was clear: the 'Catholic Action' had to be organized and promoted in France, just as Pius X had recommended, just as Pius XI was going to demand and order everywhere. . . .

"Errors condemned and general directives: Socialism is condemned. . . . Liberalism is condemned. Already Pius IX, in his encyclical 'Quanta Cura', had stigmatized those who dared to teach that the perfection of governments and civil progress demand that human society be constituted and governed without a distinction being made between true and false religions. At the same time, he promulgated the 'Syllabus' condemning modernism.

"Leo XIII showed that religious freedom is unjustifiable. The Pope recalled also that freedom of speech and writing cannot be justly admitted...

" 'These teachings and prescriptions of the Church', says Pius XI, 'must be revived'. Under the control of the Hierarchy, organized

[2] La Federation nationale catholique. Preface by Father Janvier, Dominican (Flammarion, Paris 1930, pp. 30, 33, 36, 44, 53, 72, 82 and 87).

by the decentralization of the Diocesan Committees, this is still the principal aim of the F.N.C. . . .

"General Castelnau's 'En avant!' applies in the Catholic Action, as in war.

"It is unnecessary to say how very closely Pius XI watched the practices of French Catholics."

It is only fair to say of the President of the F.N.C, a great war-time personality, that his intentions were pure and, misunderstanding the true aims of the Holy See, he believed he was acting in the interests of his country.

Pious pens were mobilized to exalt the work of Mussolini and Hitler, of these "men of Providence" who were the pride of the two "regenerated" nations.

It would be cruel to recall the names of all those who more or less consciously succumbed to the contagion and bowed down to the idols.

* * *

Let us for a moment return to the political situation in France following the disturbances of 6 February 1934. A book by Francois Ternand[3] will take us back:

The "man of Providence"

"... A propaganda campaign, skilful and insistent, begins in favour of a 'Petain dictatorship' . . . .

"In 1935 Gustave Herve published a booklet which we shall leaf through and which reflects exceptionally well the ambitions and schemes inherent in the policies with which we have been dealing. The brochure is entitled: 'C'est Petain qu'il nous faut', and though it is quite well known, it would appear that insufficient light has so far been directed on the singular warnings which it contains. . . .

"It is particularly instructive to reread these articles of La Victoire, in which defeat is recorded and the government of defeat prepared. Gustave Herve introduces his collection with a Preface, in which he enthusiastically defends the 'Italian recovery' and the 'recovery,

[3] L'ascension politique du marichal Petain (Editions du Livre francais, Paris 1946, pp. 40, 41 et seq).

still more marvellous, of Germany', and he exalts the admirable chiefs who were responsible. And we, the French, what is our position? We, 'instead of a Mussolini or a Hitler, have a Flandin!' And yet our man is here. We have but to rally to him. . . . His name is Petain.

"Thus, 'Petain is the man for us', for 'the nation is in danger'. Not only the nation, but Catholicism: 'In every country Christian civilization is doomed to die if a dictatorial regime does not come to the rescue.'. . ."

* * *

Let us now hear General Chadebec de Lavalade,[4] Philippe Petain's equal, describe the latter's attitude during and after the first world war:

Petain ?

"There appeared, in Paris in 1936 and at the beginning of 1937, a book which was indisputably the best military history of the 1914-1918 war. ... It is the four volumes of 'L'Histoire de la Guerre Mondiale', by the four French generals Duffour, Daille, Hellot and Tournes. ... It is clearly shown that:

—Although Petain may have been a subordinate chief of high value, he never possessed the moral qualities of a supreme chief, military or civil, that is to say, of a chief in the highest sense of the word;

—His attitude towards our allies in 1916-1918 contained the nucleus of his conduct towards England in 1940."

* * *

Fault will long be found with Petain's conduct in his capacity as Chief of State—albeit of a vassal state—during the years 1940 to 1945.

What part did his own will play in the measures taken by his government ? And how much of what happened was due to pressure

[4]Petain? (Editions Edmond Chariot. Paris 1946, pp. 8 to 15, 26 to 33, 35 and 75).

from the invader? To reply with absolute certainty, it would be necessary to have fathomed the secret of his conscience.

Absolute justice demands that the accused should be given the benefit of the doubt . . . : we shall assume that certain measures taken by the Chief of this vassal state were more or less imposed upon him. But others corresponded so well to his political opinions, his religious faith and especially his clerical tendencies that there can be no doubt that he took them of his own accord—or, it would be better to say, upon the inspiration of the Holy See.

Camille Cianfarra[5] writes in this connexion:

"On several occasions during the months following the armistice, the Pope, by his approbation, encouraged the aged Marshal. . . . The Vatican entered into negotiations with Vichy with a view to concluding a concordat. ... It was requesting complete freedom for its religious orders and congregations, the restoration of religious instruction in the schools and recognition of the Catholic Action . . . the Osservatore Romano was praising Marshal Petain's constructive efforts."

Besides, one has only to read what La Croix was writing at the time to get a complete picture. An idea may be had from the following extracts:

—"We have many sins to atone for. An official policy of dechristianization has sapped our nation's vitality. . . . There has been too much blasphemy and not enough prayers. . . . The day of reckoning had to come. That day is here and we must atone for our sins with tears and with blood. . . " (27 June 1940)

—"La Croix has taken pleasure in noting the close agreement existing between the pontifical encyclicals and the speeches or writings of the Head of the State, and in stressing the parallelism between many of the Marshal's declarations and the teachings of Leo XIII, Pius XI and Pius XII. . . . The French, by accepting the Pope's ideas, are sure of fulfilling some of Marshal Petain's dearest wishes and in particular of responding to some of the most urgent exhortations contained in his last message." (24 August 1941).

—"It would appear that the terms: 'European revolution' and 'national revolution' are inseparable. Our revolution must closely

[5]La guerre et le Vatican, pp. 331 and 332.

resemble those of our neighbours (Italy, Germany, Spain). Europe is heading towards total synchronization." (15 August 1941)

—"It is very understandable that these states (Germany, Italy, Japan), should have agreed to establish a front against a danger which, particularly in the West, is threatening civilization and our Christian ideals." (5 December 1942).

—"This (Laval's visit to Hitler on 29 April 1943) will widen our horizon; from the silent position that was hers immediately after the armistice, France moves into a position of a nation with a role to play..." - (3 May 1943).

—"Nothing good can come of the intervention of troops from across the Channel and from the other side of the Atlantic. ..."

(10 August 1943).

At the Liberation, as we know, all the newspapers that had published under the German occupation were suppressed. 'La Croix" alone was excepted from this measure. Was this the reward for having printed such texts ?

This question should be put to Mr, de Menthon, one of the chiefs of the religious (M.R.P.) party, and at that time Keeper of the Seal. Indeed, let us see what Artaban of 13 December 1957 has to say:

"For four years, 'La Croix' was drawing upon the secret funds of the 'Head of enslaved France'. An original document duly photographed shows a monthly subsidy of 160,000 francs for 1943—i.e., 1,920,000 francs for the year. This subsidy was to be increased during the following years, until the Liberation.

"In 1944, 'La Croix' was prosecuted for having dealings with the enemy and was handed over to the Court of Justice of Paris, the investigations being entrusted to Judge Raoult, who found no ground for prosecution. The affair was brought before the tribunal of the Chamber on 13 March 1946 (see J.O.D.P., pp. 713-714) and it was then learned that Mr. de Menthon, Minister of Justice and fiery reformer of the French press, had exerted pressure in favour of 'La Croix'. . . ."

Artaban also stresses a fact of vital importance:

" 'La Croix' used to receive orders from the German Lieutenant Sahm and, at Vichy, from Pierre Laval."

Apparently, these orders were very much like those of the Holy Father, who expressed his satisfaction by saying:

"The Pope sends his blessing to 'La Croix', the organ of 'pontifical thought'." (La Croix, 28 January 1942).

Is this not sufficiently clear?

* * *

The Episcopate, it goes without saying, did not express itself any differently from the official organ of the Holy See. This may be seen from a few quotations:

—"Today, in the face of immense disaster, all Frenchmen feel that the national Rebirth calls for a vigorous renewal of our moral value. They expect the Church to play its important role in this urgent task of salvation. . . . Catholic Action must be given a more important place."

(Cardinal Gerlier, Archbishop of Lyons, Primat des Gaules).

—"In mid-November 1940, Cardinal Baudrillart, fully supported by Cardinal Suhard, asked me to bring to Marshal Petain a letter in which the Rector was assuring the Chief of the State of his devotion, friendship and complete loyalty. I also had the mission of imparting to Marshal Petain the Rector's concern over the future of Christian instruction in our country."

(Le Cardinal Baudrillart, Temoignages et Souvenirs, by Canon Tricot, Professor at the Institut Catholique. Flammarion, Paris 1943, pp. 92 and 93).

—"We owe him our respect, our obedience and our prayers. He would have spared us our misfortunes, had France been governed according to his principles. . . ."

(Mgr. Chollet, Archbishop of Cambrai—23 January 1940).

"Providence has honoured us through him."

(Mgr. Gerbeau, Bishop of Nimes, La Croix, 24 January 1941).

In 1942, in the full euphoria of the Vichy Government, the Master General of the Dominicans. S. Gillet[6], published a book entitled Le Reveil de l'ame francaise, which he dedicated to the Chief of the State with this flattering quotation: "To Marshal Petain, to whom honour is due for having awakened the soul of France".

[6]Le Riveil de l'ame francaise (Flammarion, Paris 1942, pp. 73 et seq.).

What is to be found in this book, which bears the Imprimatur of Vichy, No. 11,098? Father Gillet openly condemns the principles of 1789, the League of Nations as well as liberal doctrines. It would have surprised us if he had not done so:

"A regime in flagrant contradiction with that which had been hers ever since her earliest days, has almost been the death of France. Why, then, should those scrupulous observers of the experiment, who advised the French to have done with a regime of death and to return to their traditions, be called retrogressive and enemies of progress? ... It is no longer a question of exalting the Declaration of Human Rights. . . .

"We ought all to give thanks to Providence for having sent us once again a saviour in the person of the Marshal."

We know that this saviour was accompanied by many others. We need only recall number two: Mr. Pierre Laval, Chief of the Vichy Government.

Our second saviour was even more explicit than the first, when he declared, very much to the point:[7]

"I want Germany to win. It seems strange, does it not, to hear the conquered wish for the conqueror's victory ? But this war is unlike the others: it is a veritable war of religion! Yes, a war of religion."

That is clear enough! Moreover, one is not likely to doubt the competence of the man who uttered these words, particularly since he had been made a count by Pius XI in 1935.

It would be irksome to go on listing specimens of the pious literature which flourished at that time. But we should reproach ourselves were we to omit one of the gems of the collection, quoted by Jean Cotereau in his excellent work L'Eglise a-t-elle collabore ?

Le Patriote des Pyrenees explains why the Pope did not raise his voice in 1939 and 1940 in favour of the soldiers who we believed were fighting for civilization and everything that is right. "Today we must admit that this cause was at best very badly defended. Indeed, time was to show that its defenders were neither materially nor morally up to their task. Thus it is understandable that the Pope should have kept the cause of Christian civilization apart from our own and avoided linking its destiny with that of our armies. Had he

[7]Radio National. 2 January 1943.

not done so, he would now be confronted with its collapse."

(La Croix, 8 September 1940).

No doubt the reader will, like ourselves, have appreciated this little master-piece of baseness, not to say, of infamy.

* * *

The following extracts are taken from the forceful preface which Maurice Nadeau wrote for the book L'Eglise a-t-elle collabore?:[8]

"Yes, the Church did 'collaborate'. Not only did she serve Petain's regime, she inspired it, she identified herself with it, and ruled through it. . . .

"It is not even a question of a bargaining between Petain and the Catholic Church . . . but of a process of osmosis: Petain was the Church's man just as he was Germany's man. 'His speeches and the Papacy's encyclicals are of a same noble inspiration'. When he received the American press, Petain said: 'France will restore to honour the great truths of Christian ethics', whilst the Editor-in-chief of La Croix declared that 'the New Order will bear the imprint of the Christian character ... if it is to succeed and to endure'. Today we know what is meant by this 'new order', so highly extolled by the Church and the ex-marshal: thousands in concentration camps, thousands of shot 'terrorists', thousands of assassinated Jews, and an entire nation in chains. . . .

" Was there a single voice of authority to be heard explicitly stigmatizing the Nazi exactions, the forced labour, the deportations and French servitude? Instead, there were twenty, fifty, one hundred prelate voices—august voices these—bidding us not only to obey and to suffer, but to enthuse over German victories; voices demanding the death penalty for Communists, approving the destruction of Free-masonry and the persecution of the Jews; voices magnifying the relieving troops, the S.T.O. and 'collaboration'; and voices bawling against the trade-unions as well as against the materialism and 'foolish pretentions of the working masses'.

" 'Now is the time for the Catholics', proclaimed Canon Clavel, meaning the long-awaited revenge on the 'laic school'. . . . 'Our defeat

[8]"Spartacus", Paris, May 1946.

will bear more fruit than a frustrated victory', proclaimed an editor of 'La Croix'. 'Had we been victorious, we would probably have remained the prisoners of our errors', echoed Cardinal Gerlier. And the Pope himself, from the summit of his infallibility, acknowledging France as 'the eldest daughter of the Church', 'confidently welcomed the measures of public morality which everyone felt were so urgent for the true and lasting restoration of the country'.

"France has forgotten. . . . 'La Croix', which was the most dangerous organ at the service of the Collaboration, is found among the newspapers of liberated France, and the prelates who were pressing French youth to work for a German victory, have not been handed over to the tribunals."

Thus, as early as 1945, Maurice Nadeau was able to write, with every good reason, "France has forgotten".

* * *

As Franz von Papen points out in his Memoires,[9] the Franco-German "collaboration" was no hasty improvisation ordained by circumstances, but a carefully premeditated long-term enterprise, and Mgr. Baudrillart was one of its very first originators.

We should not be surprised, therefore, to find the eminent prelate, after the defeat of 1940, at the head of the most ardent Hitlerists. What Parisian does not remember the famous exhibition in favour of French enrolment in the L.V.F., organized at the Salle Wagram under the high patronage of Marshal Petain, of the Minister Schleir, Hitler's personal representative, and with the active participation of Cardinal Baudrillart and of Abel Bonnard ?

Only death put an end, in 1942, to this holy man's activities.

The message of condolence which Pius XII on this occasion sent to the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris is significant. It was through the Apostolic Nuncio at Berlin that the message was sent. This violation of elementary international protocol speaks volumes for the feelings of His Holiness. There is such a thing as wishful thinking, and what could have been more desirable for the Pontificate than to see the richest regions of France included in the advantageous

[9]Flammarion, Paris 1953. pp. 91 and 92.

German concordat, and the number of Catholics in the Reich increased by a few million? It is obvious that the "collaboration" was a "paying" proposition for the Church, and one understands why her prelates should have done all they could to promote it—even, like Mgr. Baudrillart, from beyond the tomb.[10]

* * *

Yet, certain Catholic patriots, like Mr. Jacques Madaule,[11] recognized that the Episcopate was largely responsible for the damage done by this propaganda of Vichy, which, by means of gross intellectual and moral subversion, was trying to misrepresent to the French their country's defeat and was inciting them to give themselves unreservedly to the service of the enemy:

"It cannot be denied that the majority of the bishops are partly responsible for these calamities and we cannot fairly judge and condemn Petain without judging and condemning the members of the Episcopate who, until the very end, gave him their full support."

It will doubtless be recalled that these collaborating prelates escaped all, or nearly all, sanction.

"The day after the Liberation, the Government decided to demand the Vatican to hand over thirty bishops and archbishops whose attitude during the occupation had been questioned."[12] Thanks to the mediation of the Vatican delegate, three only had to resign.

* * *

In 1936, Canon Coube[13] produced a book under the apparently innocent title of Sainte Therese de l'Enfant Jesus et les crises du temps present, bearing the Imprimatur. Among other questionable phrases were the following:

"I only know that a world war is possible, more dreadful than the last. I also know that this war is in the hands of God, like a bomb which He can drop on the nations if they continue to provoke His anger."

[10] The same operation was carried out to the detriment of Poland. Pius XII had the cynicism, also when the war was at its height, to place the Polish Catholics under the German bishop of Danzig. (AUTHOR'S NOTE.)
[11] Les chretiens dans la cite (Sagittaire, Paris 1946, p. 158).
[12] Ici Paris, 18 July 1949.
[13] Op. cit., pp. 6, 9, 212 and 216.

The threat to the "laic" democracies is unambiguous. But let us see what comes next:

"What is the role of Saint Theresa? The Sovereign Pontiff has proclaimed her patroness of Catholic missions and of unfortunate Russia . . . here, then, is a little Frenchwoman rising up, smiling but terrible, like an army in battle array, against the Bolshevik colossus."

This was foretelling the campaign of 1942, in which the L.V.F., alongside the Wehrmacht and dressed in its uniform, was to fight Russia. Moreover, in order that the reader should in no way misunderstand the real character of the operation predicted by this mystical jargon, the author is very careful to add:

"The Pope who has invested her with this formidable mission is no dreamer, but a powerful man of action and an inspired creator who knows what is going on in the world today."

Thus, we are warned that Pius XI, in this battle to the death against Communist Russia—but also Orthodox Russia, a point of cardinal importance—is not counting solely on the little saint and on theological canons. This "powerful man of action", this "inspired creator" of Hitlerist Europe who "knows what is going on in the world today" will resort to more efficient weapons.

Yet it was fitting that it should be revealed to us—in 1936, mark you—what part Saint Theresa, that is to say France, would take in the "just and holy" wars to which the fiery ecclesiastic refers.

After a violent diatribe against the republican regime and against parliamentarians—"What makes men harmful is their religious indifference and their laicism, which brings down upon their heads and upon their country the wrath of Heaven"—the author expresses his faith in a national revival, which will be entirely due to the "race of saviours, to the race of great-hearted men who work solely for the Glory of God".

Can it be doubted, after this, that Canon Coube was in the secret of the gods, that is to say of the politics that were being machinated at the Vatican? His allusions are transparent: the Papacy, which singled out Mussolini, Hitler and Franco, to act as its secular arms, keeps in reserve other "saviours"—to serve in the enslaved countries this time. In France, there will be Petain, Laval, Mgr. Baudrillart, Doriot, de Brinon, Deat, Abel Bonnard, Darquier de Pellepoix,

etc. . . . One could draw up a long list of these saviours who saved nothing . . . and especially not honour!

But one cannot help feeling sad when one thinks of the many honest folk and fine Frenchmen who were thus abused by this medley of Vatican, Hitlerist and Fascist propaganda.

The truth is that the psychological preparation had been planned with care, over a long period. In France as well as in Belgium, Catholic circles had been subjected to an indoctrination both systematic and ever-increasing, "Europa machen"—make a Europe, and make it according to "Christian "principles—a happy phrase with which to veil, both honourably and piously, the serfdom that had been prepared for the guileless. It has, in fact, been in use ever since; and is still served up by Catholic Action propagandists, so skilful at diverting to the ends of the most cynical Vatican policy the youthful enthusiasm of new generations for a broad supranationalism.

* * *

Thus, the "revival" which was awaiting honest Frenchmen was maturely and cunningly premeditated. He who styles himself the Vicar of God took it upon himself to "bring forth men from on his right hand" to "raise up (with the kick of German boots) the country of Clovis and Saint Louis". We are greatly indebted to him for this!

But, Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia and France were not the only ones to benefit by the bounties of the Holy Father. It will be seen in the next chapter how his tireless solicitude was also at work in Croatia.

And he said, What hast thou done ? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.
(Genesis IV, 10)

Part IV

MURDERERS' HOUR

CHAPTER I

MONSEIGNEUR STEPINAC'S CROATIA

DISMEMBERMENT of Yugoslavia by Hitler and Mussolini. Creation of a Croat satellite state. — Retrospect: the Vatican's hostility towards the Yugoslav Government. Threats uttered by Pope Pius XI in 1937. — Ante Pavelitch, Chief of the Ustashis, murderer of King Alexander I and of Louis Barthou, is in the pay of Italy. Beginning of the massacre of the Serbs in Croatia. Pavelitch, leader of the murderers, received in great pomp by Pope Pius XII. — Under the sign of the Cross: the Ustashi Government proclaims: "We will kill some of the Serbs, deport others, and the remainder shall be obliged to embrace the Roman Catholic religion". — Atrocities assume appalling proportions. Catholic priests preach the massacre of the Orthodox and Jews. — The sons of Gentle St. Francis: Franciscan and Jesuit monks march at the head of the assassins and take part in the killing. — The concentration camp of Jasenovac and its Chief, the Franciscan brother Filipovitch Majstorovitch: mass throat-cutting; the special knife; the "throat-cutting competition". — The Ustashis' gift to their Chief Ante Pavelitch: twenty kilogrammes of human eyes. — The martyrdom of Orthodox bishops. Mgr. Platon shod like a horse. — Mgr. Stepinac, Catholic Archbishop of Zagreb, main pillar of the Pavelitch Government. Thousands of overwhelming statements, photographs and testimonies. Gold, stolen from the victims, hidden in the

Archiepiscopal Palace. After the defeat of the Germans, the flight of the Ustashis and of 500 priests and monks who had taken part in the massacres. The fugitives welcomed and hidden in convents in Austria, in Italy . . . and even in Paris. The Vatican in the face of the Ustashi terror: no reproach. Ante Pavelitch, the "practising" Catholic, is covered with blessings by Pius XII. Father Marcone, Legate of the Holy See, rules with Mgr. Stepinac over all official ceremonies. — The "humanitar-ian" zeal of the Roman Catholic Church in Croatia, in Slovakia and even in the Philippines. — Mgr. Stepinac decorated with the "Grand Cross and Star" by the Ustashi Government. — For his part, Pius XII rewards Mgr. Stepinac with the title of Cardinal. — Astonishing impudence of His Holiness's thurifers. — Subject of a conference held at University College, Cardiff: "Should the Pope be tried as a war criminal ?" — Today. — The Confession.

"Hitler is an envoy of God."[1]

MGR. STEPINAC.

"The Third Reich is the first power in the world, not only to recognize, but also to put into practice, the high principles of the Papacy."

FRANZ VON PAPEN,
Privy Chamberlain to the Pope.

"John XXIII sends his best wishes to Cardinal Stepinac."

La Croix, 25 June 1959

THE preceding pages have already brought proof after proof of the Vatican's unlimited support of Hitler and Mussolini in their undertaking to dominate Europe, and there is little cause to be surprised by this when one has studied the identical method by which it raised first one and then the other to power and thus created its agents. We have seen how the Catholic hierarchy was placed under the orders of the Fuhrer and how, through devious Jesuistic wiles, the "doctrine" was rendered more flexible until it became the humble servant of Nazism. We have even seen, in Slovakia, one of His Holiness's prelates, Mgr. Tiso, raised—with the blessing of the Holy Father—to the rank of Chief of a puppet state and a Reich satellite; and we have also seen this prince of the Roman Church become the first supplier for Auschwitz.

Surely such examples of criminal complicity could hardly be surpassed. Yet they were, in Yugoslavia, when Mussolini and Hitler, having made themselves masters of the country, proceeded to carve out the State of Croatia.

The Vatican was then to unmask itself as it had never dared to do before. It is true that all this happened in 1941, when it was feeling certain of victory. Not only was the extermination of the Orthodox Christians and the Jews organized as an institution of the Croatian State, under the approving eye of the many members of the Catholic clergy who sat in the Ustashi Parliament,[2] but from

[1]The Croatian Sentinel, 1 January 1942.
[2]Among these were Mgr. Stepinac, Mgr. Aksamovitch, the Reverend Fathers Irgolitch, Lonacir avunitch Mikan, Politch, Severovitch. Sipitch. Skrinjar and Vucetitch. (AUTHOR'S NOTE.)

their pulpits priests encouraged and gave their blessing to the murderers. There were monks, Franciscans and Jesuits, who led these assassins and exhorted them to murder, brandishing the cross in one hand and the "mauser" or cut-throat's knife in the other.

The Inquisition, as we shall soon see, was a feeble instrument compared with the horrors that were now to be perpetrated by the adherents of the Roman Catholic Church.

* * *

It will be recalled that in 1941 Yugoslavia was invaded and dismembered by Hitler and Mussolini. The Germans and Italians shared Slovenia and Dalmatia; the northern part of the country, Voivodina, was ceded to Hungary; the southern part (Kossovo) to Albania; and Macedonia to Bulgaria. Along with Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Srem were turned into a Fascist satellite state: the so-called Independent State of Croatia. At its head was placed Ante Pavelitch, Chief of the Croatian Fascists: the "Ustashis". This name has a sinister sound and indeed, during the inter-war period it was heard all too often, first in connexion with numerous murders in Yugoslavia, then in 1934, when followers of this terrorist gang assassinated King Alexander I and Louis Barthou (the French Foreign Minister) in Marseilles. "Mussolini's Government having clear connexions with the instigators of the crime . . ." as Francois Charles-Roux[3] reminds us, the French Government vainly requested the extradition of Ante Pavelitch who had taken refuge in Italy.

This gangleader was indeed working for Italy, which was pursuing its traditional policy of expansion along the Adriatic Coast; and, of course, the Vatican was equally interested in the success of this policy.

Even when this territory was still only one of the badly-assembled units of the Habsburg Empire, its Catholic-Orthodox duality was a sore spot in the ancient monarchy.

Herve Lauriere[4] describes the situation in a well-documented and excellent work, which will often be quoted in this chapter:

[3]Huit ans au Vatican, p. 132.
[4]Assassine au nom de Dieu (Editions Dufour. 18. rue Dauphine. Paris, pp. 61 to 65, 82 and 85)

"While the majority of Croatians are Catholic, the Serbs belong to the Orthodox religion. Thus, in the eyes of Rome, they are schismatics. ... It is appropriate here to recall the extent of Austria-Hungary's efforts over two centuries, particularly during the reign of Maria Theresa, to convert the Serbs to Croatism via Catholicism. Order, in Austria-Hungary, rested upon political clericalism and the remaining vestiges of the feudal system. . . . This is what Count de Saint-Aulaire, former French Ambassador to Vienna wrote: 'In the official circles of Vienna hatred and contempt of the Serbs was a new commandment of God and the best obeyed of them all'.

"In Croatia it was the Jesuits who implanted political clericalism. . . . With the death of its great democratic leader, Raditch, Croatia has lost its principal opponent to political clericalism and it will now become attached to the Catholic Action movement as the latter is defined by Friedrich Muckermann. This German Jesuit, famous even before Hitler's day, made it known in 1928 through a hook prefaced by Mgr. Pacelli, then Apostolic Nuncio in Berlin. Muckermann wrote: "The Pope is calling for a new Catholic Action crusade. He is the guide who bears the flag of the Kingdom of Christ. . . . Catholic Action is sounding the assembly of world Catholicism. It must live its time of heroism . . . the new era can be won only at the price of bloodshed for Christ..' "

This "blood for Christ" was soon to flow in torrents in a Europe temporarily subjected to the henchmen of the Holy See, and particularly in the unfortunate country of Yugoslavia, which was not in the good graces of the Vatican, as Francois Charles-Roux[5] testifies:

"When I arrived in Rome, in June 1932, Yugoslavia's relations with the Holy See certainly left much to be desired. . . . On another occasion, it was the Pope who refused to receive a Yugoslav parliamentary delegation, headed by the President of the Chamber, Kumanudi. Yet Pope Pius XI was receiving pilgrims from Croatia, who were coming to the Vatican in a very definite spirit of provincial particularism ... he called them his 'sons of Croatia'. ... I addressed the Vatican as follows: 'Everyone in the outside world is convinced that you are unfriendly towards Yugoslavia because the Italians

[5]Op. cit., pp. 129 and 130.

are ill-disposed towards her. Prove your independence of Italy by maintaining closer relations with Yugoslavia'.

There had been a draft concordat in 1937, which never amounted to anything. It was after this failure that Pope Pius XI, during the consistory of 16 December 1937, uttered the following words, pregnant with meaning, which were published the next day in his official paper, the Osservatore Romano:[6]

"The day will come . . . pursued His Holiness—and though he would have preferred not to say it, it had to be said—the day will come when many will be sorry not to have openly and generously accepted the great gift which the Vicar of Jesus Christ was offering their country. ..."

The threat was as transparent as it was prophetic. Less than four years later this unhappy country was to learn with blood, terror and tears, the price of daring to resist the will of he who calls himself the Vicar of Christ.

"On 18 May 1941, at the head of a Croatian delegation[7] Ante Pavelitch went to Pome to present to the Emperor and King of Italy, Victor-Emmanuel III, a petition in which he was offering the crown of Zvonimir to a prince of the House of Savoy. . . . The Duke of Spoleto received the title of Tomislav II. . . .

"The same day", Herve Lauriere[8] continues, "Pope Pius XII granted a private audience to Pavelitch and his suite. . . . From the Vatican, Pavelitch had but a short distance to travel that evening, to reach the Palace of Venice, where Mussolini was awaiting him. There, the two accomplices signed a treaty delimiting Italy and Croatia, whereby Italy was assigned the Croatian coast, northern Dalmatia, and all the large islands of the Adriatic, as well as the Port of Kotor (Cattaro).

"Thus incorporated in the Axis, Pavelitch had but to declare war upon the United States when this country joined the Allies, in December 1941. . . .

"Referring to the Serbs when speaking to the Ustashi army, at Zagreb, Pavelitch dared assert that "he who could not cut away a child from his mother's womb is not a good Ustashi'.

[6]17 December 1937.
[7]It should be noted that Salis-Sewis. Vicar General to Mgr. Stepinac, participated in this delegation (AUTHOR'S NOTE.)
[8]Op. cit.. pp. 40 et seq.

Such was the man—if he can be called such—to whom Pope Pius XII had just granted the favour of a private audience. Thus the Holy Father did not shrink from shaking hands with an avowed assassin, condemned to death in his absence for the murder of King Alexander I and of Louis Barthou; with a gang-leader accused of the most horrible crimes. Indeed, on 18 May 1941, when Pope Pius XII received Ante Pavelitch and his band of killers with all due honour, the massacre of the Orthodox was already in full swing in Croatia, concurrently with the forced conversions to Catholicism. Let us once more see what Herve Lauriere[9] has to say on the subject :

"On 28 April 1941, in the middle of the night, several hundred Ustashis encircled the Serbian villages of Gudovac, Tuke, Brezovac, Klokocevac and Bolac, in the district of Bjelovar. They arrested 250 peasants, among whom were Priest Bozin and the school-teacher Stevan Ivankovitch. The women were sobbing, for they had understood why the villagers had been ordered to take along picks and shovels. Their column, flanked by Ustashis. slowly left the village and stopped in front of a field.

—"Dig your grave!"

"The powerlessness and resignation of these wretched people were such that they obeyed. Their hands were tied behind their backs with wire, before they themselves were thrown into the pit which they had dug, and buried alive. . . . The same night, near Vukovar, on the banks of the Danube, other Ustashis cut the throats of another 180 Serbs and threw their bodies into the river. . . . We now come to the town of Dvor n/Uni. The Ustashis there had as their commanding officer the Roman Catholic Priest Ante Djuritch, priest in charge of the Commune of Divusa. From the outset this ecclesiastic took on the district's administration, had the officials swear allegiance, recruited the bands of torturers and instructed them in the art of forcibly converting the Serbian Orthodox to Catholicism and of doing away with those who might resist...

"In the town of Otocac, the Ustashi officer Ivan Sajfer arrested the Orthodox priest and Serbian Deputy, Branko Dobrosavljevitch, together with his son and 331 other Serbs. Faithful to a well-tried

[9] Op. cit., pp. 50 to 53.

technique, the criminal ordered the victims to dig their grave, tied their hands behind their backs and had them executed by hatchet. The priest and his son were the last to be killed, with the atrocious refinement that the child was cut into pieces in front of his father, who was forced to recite the prayers of the dying. No sooner had the child breathed his last, than the brutes assailed the father, tearing out hair, beard, skin and eyes, and only killing him after they had tortured him for a long while."

Priest or layman, the apologist of Pope Pius XII may quibble as much as he likes: the facts are there and the dates speak for themselves. We have just seen how the "converting" Ustashis were behaving three weeks before their General Staff was to be received in great pomp at the Vatican. It should be added that the "Decree concerning the conversion from one religion to another" was published by the Ustashi Government on 3 May, fifteen days before Ante Pavelitch called upon the Holy Father.

Rome was perfectly well acquainted with these facts: "At that time, certain Roman Catholic periodicals had not hesitated to encourage him (Ante Pavelitch) and to excuse his crimes and his massacres of innocent men, women and children. . . . In the very early days, the Ustashis killed five Orthodox bishops and about one hundred priests. . . . The entire property of the Orthodox Church was confiscated. The patriarchal palace was requisitioned and put at the disposal of the Roman Catholic Church."[10]

Under the sign of the Cross

Walter Hagen[11] describes the horrors of that occupation: "It had never been doubted that the Catholic Church in Croatia was exercising its all-powerful influence over the people, with a view to a Croatian autonomy. . . . Already the averment of the Catholic Credo was tantamount to Croatian national propaganda. . . . Germany had her hands tied, so far as the whole Yugoslav question was concerned. For Yugoslavia belonged to the sphere of Italian interests. . . . The Duce made no attempt to conceal the fact that he was awaiting the opportune moment to place Yugoslavia entirely under his thumb. . . . Ciano promised Pavelitch that he and his

[10]L'Ordre de Paris. 8 February 1947
[11]From secret, pp. 168 to 176.

Ustashis would have complete power over an independent Croatian state ... the military policy of Croatia would be directed exclusively towards Italy; Croatia would be closely united to her neighbour by a dynastic tie (an Italian prince would occupy the Croatian throne). . . .

"Croatia was proclaimed an Independent State on 10 April 1941. . . . Within a very short while, the country was, thanks to the Ustashis, nothing hut a chaos of blood. . . . The new masters were directing their mortal hatred against the Jews and the Serbs who were, for all intents and purposes, officially outlawed. The most violent persecutor of Jews was Secretary of State Eugen Kvaternik-Dido. . . ."

Here is further evidence:[12]

"At his first press conference, Mile Budak, Minister of Education, when interviewed by a journalist on the possible measures to be taken by the Ustashi Government against the Serbian minorities, replied: 'We have three million bullets for them'. The same Budak added at a banquet given in the town of Gospitch: 'We will kill some of the Serbs, deport others, and the remainder shall be forced to embrace the Roman Catholic religion." Dr. Mirko Puk, Minister of Justice, at a political meeting in the town of Krizevci, declared, on 5 July 1941: 'We cannot allow the Serbs to live in Croatia. There is one God and one nation—the Croatian nation'.

"At the beginning of May 1941", writes Herve Lauriere,[13] "the commanding officer of Banja Luka, a certain Viktor Gutitch, undertook a journey across the whole of western Bosnia. As soon as he arrived in the town of Savski-Most, he hastened to publish his programme: 'The roads,' he declared, 'will be there, but there will be no Serbs left to use them. I have, indeed, given strict instructions for their complete extermination. I authorize you to exterminate the Serbs wherever you come across them, and you will be blessed for this action. . . . This is how I wish to serve the Will of God as well as that of our Croatian people'."

According to Walter Hagen:[14] "As early as the summer of 1941, these atrocities were assuming unparalleled proportions. Entire villages, for example Voynitch, even entire regions, were systematically wiped out. . . . Since ancient tradition required that Croatia and

[12]L'Ordre de Paris, 8 February 1947.
[13]Op. cit.. p. 48.
[14]Op. cit.. pp. 198 and 199.

Catholicism on the one hand, and Serbia and the Orthodox religion on the other, be synonymous, the Orthodox Christians were forced to enter the Catholic Church. Indeed, these obligatory conversions constituted the culmination of 'Croatization'."

More evidence:

Herve Lauriere[15] tells us of a downright butchery: "A veritable religious war became the pretext for massacres and for a genocide unparalleled in history. To abjure in favour of Croatian Catholicism, to disown one's land and the beliefs of one's forefathers, to be converted by force or die—and all too often to be executed after having become a renegade—such was the lot of many hundreds of thousands of Serbian inhabitants of Croatia, between 1941 and 1945.

"In June 1941, within a few days, more than one hundred thousand men, women and children were either killed or tortured and massacred in their homes, on the roads, in the fields, the prisons and the schools and even in their Orthodox churches. . . . The following are two testimonies of these atrocities. The first is the confession of one of their perpetrators, the Ustashi Hilmia Berberovitch. ... He supplied the Belgrade police with the following description of the massacre in which he took part, in the Serbian Orthodox Church of Glina: 'In the town of Glina, we arrested and imprisoned many Serbs, and transferred them in small groups from the prison to the church. Our leader armed us with hatchets and knives and we went to work. Some were killed by a blow to the heart. Others had their throats cut, and still others were cut into pieces with the hatchet. Not only was the church transformed into a slaughterhouse, but it was a hell of screams and groans. . . .'

"Here is the second testimony. It is that of a survivor, Jednak Ljuban, who told us the story of the fatal hours through which he lived in the tragic church of Glina: 'The Ustashis gathered a few hundred peasants from my village and from the outskirts and took us to Topusko. The Ustashis explained to us that we were to attend Church to hear a Te Deum sung for the longevity of the Poglavnik and of the "Independent State of Croatia".... But inside the church, everything seemed ready for Mass. We heard a truck stop in front

[15]Op. cit , pp. 54 to 58. 61

of the church and very soon a large group of Ustashis entered, armed with hatchets and knives. They closed the door behind them. One of the Ustashis then asked the Serbs whether they had on them their certificate of conversion to the Catholic religion. The only two that were able to provide such evidence were immediately released. . . . The Ustashis began massacring our group in the church. Cries of agony and fear could be heard all around. I fainted . . . and then, suddenly, silence seemed to reign in the church and I caught sight of the flickering candles which still shone on the desecrated altar....' "At Kladusa, they carted whole Serbian families to the slaughter-house. There they killed them like cattle and, without waiting for them to expire, hung them up on the butcher's hooks—the little children first, then the women and, last of all, the men. ... In the villages lying between Vlasenika and Kladanj, we discovered babies who had been impaled on the pointed slats of an enclosure, their small limbs contorted by pain, like pinned insects. The most ferocious of cannibal rites have never equalled this. . . ."

The revelations of a trial

Ante Pavelitch was too important to go into the dock as a war criminal. Like many others of his kind, he knew how to make a timely escape and this good Catholic had no difficulty in finding a holy refuge.

But his confederates were not all as lucky:

"At Banja-Luka, capital of western Bosnia", we are told by l'Ordre de Paris,[16] "the trial has just taken place of one of his principal collaborators, Dr. Viktor Gutitch, Governor of the province. Dr. Gutitch, like his accomplices, had to answer before the tribunal for his innumerable crimes. One of his collaborators was Dr. Felix Nedjelski, barrister, and the other, Dr. Nikolas Bilogrivitch, Catholic priest of Banja Luka. They helped Gutitch to exterminate the Serbian Orthodox population, to destroy the Orthodox churches and to loot the property of the people and churches.

"The mass murder which the people called the 'massacre of Saint-Elijah's Day' will be remembered as one of the most abominable crimes of human history. On this Orthodox feast day, the

[16] L'Orde Paris 9 April 1947.

Ustashi hordes exterminated hundreds of thousands of Serbian men, women and children. Blood was shed in abundance, and mutilated and lacerated corpses lay everywhere in meadow, forest, field, stream, school and church. On 7 February 1942, Gutitch, Bilogrivitch and another priest, Miroslav Filipovitch, organized horrible massacres in several Serbian villages on the outskirts of Banja Luka.

" 'After the massacre of the village of Drakulitch". said Dr. Gutitch, 'I arrived at Banja Luka. The following day. the curate Miroslav Filipovitch came to me and asked me for some spirits. While he was drinking, he said. "Yesterday at Drakulitch, we exterminated every living soul—about 1,300 men, women and children." Then he asked me what he should do if in Zagreb they reproached him with having taken part in the massacre.'

"But the curate Filipovitch had nothing to fear. No one in Zagreb made the slightest reproach to him for his crime, no more than they were to do for those he was still going to commit.

The population's forced conversion

"Gutitch and Bilogrivitch forced the Orthodox population to change to Catholicism. Terrified by the bloodshed, the Serbs believed that this conversion would preserve them from persecution and suffering, and, giving way to this pressure, they embraced Catholicism. Bilogrivitch, who received them, though he knew the motives for their conversion, forced the converts to learn the teachings and prayers of their new religion to the smallest detail. The role of some of the Catholic clergy in the Ustashi State was odious. Certain priests were concerned only to acquire as many followers as possible, thinking that this would weaken Serbian orthodoxy and annihilate its religious institutions.

"The third accused, Nedjelski, was in addition the organizer of the 'Crusaders', a youth organization attached to the Ustashis. In his capacity as member of this organization, Dr. Nedjelski, a fervent admirer of Hitler, went to Germany to learn 'from the source' how to educate the young, with a view to improving the organization of that horrible place of torture—the Independent State of Croatia.

"Tomo Brkitch, a Croatian witness, told the Court about the

massacre of the Serbs: 'In 1941, at Kljutch, many Serbs were massacred by the Ustashis. In certain villages, Serbian families were locked in their houses, to which the Ustashis then set fire. I remember that on one occasion some men, women and children had come to Kljutch to be converted—"so that we might save our lives, my brother", they said.'

"Nikola Dragovitch, from the village of Hatitch, succeeded in escaping, thanks to the corpses which covered him: 'I was with my cousin and many of our villagers. The Ustashis tied us, two by two and back to back, and started to fire on us. Some were killed on the spot, others were still alive. I was only injured and was soon buried under the falling bodies. Five hundred men lost their lives there. It was the dead who saved me. At dusk, I managed to escape to the neighbouring forest.'

"Pero Dodig, Serb, from Savski Most, asserted that the Ustashis killed 7,000 men there, within a few days. A widow, Ivanitch, saw every one of her seven boys killed the same day, Saint-Elijah's Day.

"The Moslem priest of Prijedor, Dervish Bibitch, made his statement, and added: 'One day, in 1941, Gutitch had come to Prijedor. As soon as he was out of his car he declared that he was not satisfied with the welcome given him, since not one hanged Serb was to be seen. During the meeting he declared: "The Serbs must go, some by rail, some by river—without a boat—and the bodies of the remainder strewn across the fields which, in accordance with the promises of our great allies. Mussolini and Hitler, will for ever belong to Croatia.".'

"Gutitch's visit and speech were effectively followed by a terrifying massacre of Serbs at Prijedor and the surrounding area. The horrors that took place there are related by Hasan Palik, a Moslem and a coachman by trade: 'In August 1941, I was ordered to evacuate from the town the bodies of the murdered Serbs and to bury them. For two days I carried them and buried them. Among them were old women, old men and the tiniest babies. Bodies lay in every quarter of the town—in the courtyards, on the doorsteps. Sometimes, they were completely naked. Now and then among the mass of martyrs thrown into the common grave, there were some who were still alive, and who, regaining consciousness, took advantage of the night to escape from this bloody grave.'

The Camp of Jasenovac

"In the camp of Jasenovac, that hell on earth, more than 200,000 people—men, women and children—were killed. It was the most sinister of all the camps. One of its survivors, Dusan Malinovitch, Serb, tells of its horrors: 'Brother Filipovitch. Chief of the Camp. and organizer of terrifying massacres in several villages around Banja Luka, used to pay daily visits to the gaols, where he would cut the throats of women and children. With his assistants, he would also kill his victims with the hatchet. The poor wretches would die in the most atrocious agony.

Red streams

"At nocturnal orgies, Gutitch, surrounded by his partisans, took part in the assassination of the Serbian bishop Platon, of Banja Luka, of several deputies and of many of the town's inhabitants, who were tortured with monstrous bestiality, and thrown into a river. Gutitch spread the blood-thirsty game with his orders and incitements to murder. In the days of pagan Rome, Christianity was a crime, and all those guilty of this crime were thrown to the wild animals. In Ante Pavelitch's Croatian State, there was the crime of 'Serbian Orthodoxy', and all Serbs were doomed to either the stake or slaughter. This was how Pavelitch sought to settle the problems of race and religion, and to prepare the annexation of the Serbian countries to Croatia.

"Down the streams and rivers, which were red with human blood, drifted the mutilated bodies of the murdered, who, their arms bound and often bearing coarsely worded tags, could not, even now, find the peace of death. Among the ruins of their desecrated temples, hundreds of Orthodox priests suffered the martyrdom of early Christian ages.

"No words could describe the sufferings endured by the Serbian people in the Ustashi State. No healthy-minded person could imagine the many crimes committed by Ante Pavelitch, Andrija Artukovitch, Dr. Saritch, Gutitch. Eugen Kvaternik-Dido, Kulenovitch and so many others.

"At the decisive moment of the Yugoslav people's struggle for liberty, these Ustashi traitors sold themselves to the enemy."

Mass throat-cutting at Jasenovac

Herve Lauriere[17] tells us that:

"One of the specialities of the camp was mass throat-cutting. It was carried out with a special 'Graviso' knife. Imagine a kind of dagger, curved at the end and fixed to a special handle which the slaughterer ties to his fore-arm. Armed with this terrible weapon, the murderer would have someone hold back the victim's head and then would slash, as with a razor, the well-stretched throat. From time to time those in charge of the camps would organize competitions for the 'best throat-cutter.'. . . Those who were not killed in this way, had every chance of being burned alive in the brick-kilns, around which the camp of Jasenovac had been built. . . . The ovens could take between 450 and 600 people. During the first months of 1942, children—mostly Jews—were burned there en masse. . . ."

The Sons of Gentle Saint Francis

"During a sermon, in July 1941", writes Mr. Herve Lauriere,[18] Ante Klaritch, Franciscan Brother of Tramosnica, uttered these unbelievable words, 'You have not yet killed a single Serb. You are nothing but old women who should be wearing skirts! If you are not all armed, take an axe or a sickle, and, wherever you meet a Serb, cut his throat.'

"As for Brother Augustino Cievola, from the Monastery of St. Francis, at Split, 'to the great amazement of his fellow-citizens, he was going about the streets, a revolver strapped to his habit, inviting the people to massacre the Orthodox Christians. . . .'

"Father Bozidar Bralo, who was soon appointed Ustashi prefect of Bosnia-Herzegovina, never travelled by car without carrying a machine-gun. 'Death to the Serbs!' was his message to the villages. He was accused of having personally participated in the massacre of 180 Serbs at Alipasin-Most, and of having danced, in his cassock, together with other Ustashis, a 'dance of Death' around the bodies of his victims. This Bozidar Bralo was a patron of the famous division 'Crna Legija' (the 'Black Legion') whose crimes in Bosnia-

[17]Op. cit.. pp. 140 and 141.
[18]Op cit.. pp. 120 et seq.

Herzegovina were numberless. . . . Seven thousand people were exterminated within the space of three days in the Savski-Most district.

"One of the celebrities of the Catholic Ustashi world was Dragutin Kamber, Parish-priest of Doboj, in central Bosnia. His titles as well as his zeal for the regime very soon raised him to the rank of prefect of the District of Doboj. To his credit were the arrest, deportation or execution of Orthodox priests and of Serbs in general, as well as the closing-down of the church of St. Peter and St. Paul. ... He wrote many articles in the Ustashi and religious press, in which he never ceased to defend both his cherished regime and Hitler's new order in Europe. ... At the first signs of resistance against the regime of terror which he represented in his district, he fled to Sarajevo, where he was soon to occupy a very important position at Ustashi headquarters and to be nominated Chief of Propaganda with the grade of Colonel. . . ."

Sadism

"The Franciscan Brother, Miroslav Filipovitch", writes Mr. Herve Lauriere,[19] "went as far as to accept the role of executioner in the concentration camp of Jasenovac. . . .

"The end justifies the means. . . . Certain executioners repeatedly proved themselves capable of a sadism and a cruelty as vile, if not viler, than all that dishonoured the human race in the Nazi camps of extermination . . . their leaders having learned the technique of murder in Pavelitch's special schools. . . . What, too, can one say of those Catholic priests who were so unbelievably devoted—I can think of no other word to qualify their attitude—whether in their morbidity or their fanatism. . . . Mgr. Dionis Juricev, the personal confessor of that monster Ante Pavelitch, dared to declare, in the locality of Starza, that all Serbs refusing to be converted to Catholicism were to be killed. . . ."

The Roman Church did indeed tolerate all these crimes. She fondly sheltered murderous priests and monks in her bosom. She never once disowned Mgr. Stepinac, their responsible chief—on the contrary!

[19]Op. cit.. pp. 113 et seq.

Twenty kilogrammes of human eyes

"It was at this time." writes Herve Lauriere,[20] "that Italian soldiers at Dubrovnik were able to photograph an Ustashi who was proudly carrying around his neck two garlands and a necklace made out of human tongues and eyes.

"In his book 'Kaput' the Transalpine writer, Curzio Malaparte. has told of his visit, as war correspondent of the Corriere della Sera to the Poglavnik Ante Pavelitch. A close friend of Count Ciano—Casertano, Minister Plenipotentiary of Italy at Zagreb—accompanied him.

" 'The Croatian people', said Pavelitch to Malaparte, 'want to be governed by kindness.' 'As he spoke', continues Malaparte, 'I noticed there was a wicker basket on the desk, to the right of the Poglavnik. The lid was raised, and one could see that the basket was filled with what appeared to be oysters. Ante Pavelitch lifted the basket-lid, and showing me the molluscs, a mass of gluey and gelatinous oysters, he told me, smiling his lethargic smile:

-"This is a gift from my faithful Ustashis: twenty kilogrammes of human eyes".' "

In case anyone should doubt this story, let us recall the words of a British journalist, J. A. Voigt,[21] who wrote in 1943:

"Croatia's policy consisted in massacre, deportation or conversion. Hundreds of thousands were massacred. The massacres were accompanied by the most bestial tortures. The Ustashis gouged out their victims' eyes, which they wore as garlands or carried in bags, to be given away as mementos."

The martyred Orthodox bishops

"I am ashamed to recall", writes Herve Lauriere,[22] "the tortures to which the Ustashis subjected two Orthodox bishops: the Bishop of Zagreb, Mgr. Dositej, whom they beat and tortured until he went mad, and that venerable octogenarian who was the Bishop of Sarajevo, Mgr. Petar Zimonitch, whose throat was slit like a pig's. . .

"Who would deny the hideousness of the role adopted by Mgr. Saritch, Catholic Archbishop of Sarajevo in this business? While

[20] Op. cit., pp. 136 and 137.
[21] Nineteenth Century and After. August 1945
[22] Op. cit.. pp. 87 to 90 and 93.

his brother-in-Christ and fellow-citizen, Bishop Zimonitch was dying so ignominiously, that eminent ecclesiastical dignitary, who had been a member of the Ustashi movement since 1934, had the effrontery to write in his review 'Katolicki Tjednik', the Catholic weekly, impious words in order to exalt 'the use of revolutionary methods in the service of truth, justice and honour', and to declare further that it is 'foolish and unworthy of the disciples of Christ to think that the battle against evil (sic) could ever be conducted in a noble manner, with gloves on. . . .'

"This Catholic prelate dedicated an 'Ode to the Poglavnik Pavelitch':

" 'Doctor Ante Pavelitch, O beloved name!
In him does Croatia find its Heavenly joy.
May the Heavenly Saviour accompany thee ever,
Thou, our adored guide!'

(The Croatian People, 25 December 1941)

Shod like a horse

"The torture to which Mgr. Platon, an eighty-one-year-old Orthodox bishop was subjected, is unprecedented in the history of barbarity, as his torturers shod him like a horse and then, despite his atrocious suffering, made him walk to within a few kilometres of the town. And when his mutilated feet could no longer carry him and he fell, they tore at his beard (as they did to all the other priests) and, on the martyr's bared breast, the Ustashis lit a charcoal fire. After which there remained but to deal the dying man the last hatchet blows and to throw his body into the River Vrbanja...."

As we leave this veritable "Chamber of Horrors" which was the "regeneration" of Croatia by the Ustashi murderers, we now come to an account an eminent Yugoslav in exile has given of the services unceasingly rendered by Mgr. Stepinac to the zealots of the True Faith, throughout their apostolate.

Mgr. Stepinac and the Ustashis

". . . On 10 April 1941, the day on which the Croatian Ustashi State was created, Mgr. Stepinac visited General Kvaternik and congratulated him upon this event—in reality, the work of Hitler

and Mussolini. On 18 April, the day when the Pavelitch Government was formed, Mgr. Stepinac called upon Pavelitch, to welcome him and to congratulate him on behalf of the Church. ... A week later, Mgr. Stepinac issued a pastoral letter in which he invited the clergy of his diocese to have a Te Deum sung in all the churches, in honour of Ustashi Croatia; he also added: 'Knowing as we do the men who today hold the destinies of the Croatian people in their hands, we are firmly convinced that our effort will be furthered and completely understood.' (Le Journal Catholique, No. 17—1941.)

"Mgr. Stepinac became Member of the Ustashi Parliament; he wore Ustashi decorations; he attended all the big official meetings of the Ustashis, during which he even made speeches; he posed beside the Croatian Episcopate, whom he took to see Pavelitch on 28 of the following June: an encounter which was to seal the intimate collaboration between Croatia's spiritual powers and Pavelitch . . . and so on . . . and so on.

"Is it then surprising that the Croatian satellite State should have regarded Mgr. Stepinac with deference? That the Ustashi press should have sounded his praises? It is, alas, all too evident that without the support of Mgr. Stepinac, both on the religious and on the political plane, Ante Pavelitch would never have enjoyed such close collaboration from the Catholics in Croatia. Ante Pavelitch had every reason to thank God for Mgr. Stepinac's attitude—and not to complain of it!

"When the Ustashi State felt its end drawing near, Pavelitch very seriously considered handing over the reins to Mgr. Stepinac; he was informed of this plan, but it was upset by the partisans advancing towards Zagreb. Nevertheless, Mgr. Stepinac still offered his palace as a refuge to political terrorists and murderers who were being sought by the police. It was with his consent that the archives of the Ustashi Government were hidden there. After the war, a part of the gold stolen from the victims of the Ustashis was discovered in the vaults of the churches and even under a monastery altar. . . .

"It is true that at the end of 1943, when everyone saw that the Nazis and the Fascists were losing, Mgr. Stepinac took certain steps to provide for the future—but this was already well jeopardized, for the Ustashi list of victims bore the names of some 600,000 martyrs—Orthodox and Jewish Serbs—who had been massacred!

These are quite apart from the 240,000 Orthodox Christians who were forced to adopt Catholicism! No prelate was more ardent than Mgr. Stepinac in spreading propaganda against the Allies. It should be recalled that many a time the B.B.C. called upon him to 'retract' his speeches, but he preferred to hold his tongue! . . .

"In order to back this all-too-brief account with 'documents', here are two factual testimonies on Mgr. Stepinac's activities during this sinister period of the world conflict. Both emanate from Croatian Catholic personalities, the first of whom was in Croatia during the war and the second exiled in London. On 20 January 1942 Mr. Prvislav Grisogono, former Minister, wrote to Mgr. Stepinac: 'the inhuman and anti-Christian attitude of all too many Catholic Croatian priests, has not only aroused the consternation of many of their brother-priests, but it has also deeply afflicted the majority of Croatian intellectuals, including myself. I have also been deeply shocked by the absence of any public manifestation of Christian or human sympathy on the part of the Catholic hierarchy in favour of our Serbian compatriots of the Orthodox faith who have been the victims of a regime of indescribable massacre and lawlessness. It was with sorrow that I wondered how and why the authorized Catholic circles of Croatia did not feel bound to disown, in the name of the Catholic Church, the forced conversions of the Orthodox Christians and the confiscation of their goods.'

"Mr. Veceslav Vilder was a member of the exiled Government of Yugoslavia, and during a B.B.C. broadcast on 16 February 1942. he condemned the attitude of Mgr. Stepinac in the following terms: 'And now the worst atrocities are being committed around Stepinac. Our brothers' blood flows in rivers, causing an ever greater gulf. The Orthodox Christians are converted by force to Catholicism and, far from hearing the Archbishop preach revolt, we read that he is taking part in the Fascist and Nazi parades.'

"We could produce many more documents, for they are abundant. . . . And this is how Mgr. Stepinac covered with the cloak of his sacerdotal authority and his silence, a whole series of odious totalitarian activities of complete servility towards the temporal power—activities which have been written in words of blood in Yugoslav history."[23]

[23]'Letter addressed to the newspaper Le Monde by Mr. Stevan Trivunac, Editor-in-Chief of the paper Radikal, organ of the exiled Yugoslav Radical Party.

* * *

The moderation of the document just quoted was to be recognized when the time came to publish the court proceedings of Zagreb, where, after the Liberation, Mgr. Stepinac was finally required to give an account of himself. Here are a few extracts from these proceedings.

Mgr. Stepinac's trial

On 18 September 1946, the Yugoslav Government ordered the arrest of Mgr. Stepinac, Archbishop of Zagreb and Primate of the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia. This measure was taken after the Croatian Supreme Tribunal had heard the statements of those who were accused of war crimes and who belonged to the "White Crusaders" group of Stepinac's secretary, Father Ivan Salitch. These statements ran as follows:

'The Archbishopric is the centre of terrorist activity", declared Father Superior Modesto Martinchitch, Provincial of the Franciscans.

"Archbishop Stepinac's palace at Zagreb is the centre of Ustashi, 'White Crusader' and terrorist activity", affirmed Father Ivan Salitch.

To the Prosecutor's question: "What does the Archbishop want?", Father Ivan Salitch replied: "He wants an Independent State of Croatia, like that created by the Ustashis and the Italians."

Speaking of Colonel Erik Lisak, who clandestinely returned to Yugoslavia after the Liberation, Father Ivan Salitch added: "Colonel Lisak has passed the night at the Archbishop's palace and has had the banner of the 'White Crusaders' put up in the Archbishop's chapel."

The other accused confirmed that Mgr. Stepinac had played "an active role of instigator and accomplice" in their terrorist organization, which aimed to overthrow the Yugoslav regime.

War criminal

Charles Pichon[24] tells how the trial went.

"The trial of Mgr. Stepinac opened in September at Zagreb. The Archbishop was expecting this trial.... In a pastoral letter dated

[24]Histoire du Vatican, pp. 389 to 393.

July 1946, he declared: '. . . It matters little to me if one day I find myself on the list of "war criminals". . . .'

"The trial took place at Zagreb College. The accused refused to reply. ... On 11 October the Court found him guilty of having incited the Catholic clergy to collaboration with the Ustashi puppet regime, of having in his capacity as Chairman of the Conference of Bishops and President of the Catholic press, written numerous articles of 'Fascist tendencies', of having 'served the Ustashi cause by provoking racial hatred', of having incited the Croatian people to collaborate with the Ustashis, of having given 'numerous and palpable proofs of his sympathy and collaboration with the Ustashis'. of having presided over the commission of three members which directed the initial forced conversions of Serbian citizens. . . . The President of the Tribunal stipulated that, under the influence of Mgr. Stepinac, other ecclesiastics had organized Ustashi units and 'crusaders' with a view to conducting terrorist activity against the existing regime. The Archbishop was, in consequence, condemned to sixteen years' hard labour, with loss of all civic rights for a period of five years and the confiscation of all his property. . . ."

The "clear conscience" of the Archbishop of Zagreb

"To plead ignorance would have been absurd. No one is better informed of the happenings and the state of mind of the population than a high dignitary of the Church. Stepinac's main argument during his rare declarations at the trial was to question the competence of the Tribunal. . . .

"No one, not even the Vatican, was able to deny that the Catholic Church in Croatia carried out a violent conversion of Orthodox Christians. Nor was anyone able to prove the innocence of the Church's servants in face of the dreadful mass assassinations perpetrated in Croatia—the outcome of a cold political calculation and a savage religious mystique.

"Archbishop Stepinac backed the Croatian Ustashi State with all the weight of his authority. His entire activity during the occupation proves this. We have seen thousands of writings and photographs which are overwhelmingly incriminating for both the Archbishop and for many of the Croatian clergy.

"Moreover, who were the Pavelitches and the Ustashis? They were the creatures of Italian Fascism and were organized well before the war in Italy and Hungary. Could Archbishop Stepinac and his 'clear conscience' justify the unconditional support which he had given to the Ustashis ? . . .

"Stepinac concealed in his own palace the archives belonging to Pavelitch's Government. He equally hid the Ustashi treasures, fruits of pillage: thirty cases of gold pieces, which bore a sinister resemblance to the contents of the cases found in the Reichsbank cellars.

"But what lost Stepinac, was mainly his illusion of being able to launch against the new State a sort of insurrection of crusaders, made up of the few remaining Ustashi troops. It may well be asked what government in the world could continue to close its eyes to such acts, even if an archbishop were concerned. . . ."[25]

Beneath the sacred vaults

"If you have been plundering for four years", writes Herve Lauriere,[26] "you never cover up everything. Thus, as Ivan Salitch, Mgr. Stepinac's private secretary, was to testify, on 15 November 1945, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Alajbegovitch, the day before the 'government' made off, took it into his head that Archbishop Stepinac's residence would be the best hiding-place. Five heavy cases were brought to the archiepiscopal palace on the Kapitol and handed to Ivan Salitch and a certain Laskovitch. . . . Well, there was everything in the cases: Ante Pavelitch's films, photographs and speeches, as well as—and these were the main contents—nuggets and coins of gold, jewelry, precious stones, gold and platinum scraps from dentures, wedding rings, watches, bracelets—in short, everything that had been robbed from all too many victims."

Ivan Salitch, Private Secretary to Mgr. Stepinac

"That Stepinac should have asked his clergy to celebrate mass each year on 10 April, the date on which the Ustashi State was constituted. . . . That on 23 February 1942 the Archbishop should have greeted Ante Pavelitch and the 'Ustashi sabor' on his cathedral

[25] Horizons, November 1946.
[26] Op. cit., pp. 163 and 164.

parvis, that he should even have made a speech of welcome, might be considered admissible: we have known many such petty acts of cowardice.

"Unfortunately for the Archbishop, he went further than that. He, for example, received 100 million kuna from the Ustashi Government, to organize propaganda in the latter's favour: When the Ustashis had to flee, he hid, under the archiepiscopal palace at Zagreb, archives which were of a most compromising nature for Pavelitch and his people.

"Worse still: during the autumn of 1945, that is to say, after the Liberation of Yugoslavia. . . Mgr. Stepinac welcomed, took in and concealed in his palace Colonel Lisak, a renowned Ustashi, who had clandestinely returned to Yugoslavia armed with instructions from Pavelitch to organize a Hitlerist movement. At the same time, the Archbishop on various occasions contacted a spy in the pay of Italy, Lela Sofijanec, who was assuring the liaison between Trieste and the Ustashi underground movement in Croatia.

"And how could it be forgotten that two of the most dangerous terrorists and avowed traitors of the Yugoslav nation in this movement were' none other than Ivan Salitch, private secretary to Mgr. Stepinac, and the priest Simecki, his most intimate friend? Even the least prejudiced will grant that this is an overwhelming record."[27]

There is still one question to be answered: What happened, after the Liberation of Yugoslavia, to those converting zealots who, for four years, had worked so well for the "unification" of their country under the papal banner ? Herve Lauriere[28] gives us the reply:

"No less than 4,000 Ustashis—Pavelitch, his ministers, generals, chiefs of police, commandants of the concentration camps, executioners and torturers—fled to Austria and Italy. They left behind them thousands of burning, plundered and deserted villages, and, in the cellars, caves, precipices, and in the graves dug in the fields, just how many hundreds of thousands of bodies no one will ever know. Archbishop Saritch, Bishop Garitch and 500 priests also fled with Pavelitch's column to Austria. They then went to Switzerland, where they were able to live in Fribourg, thanks to a Croatian Catholic priest who had taken up his abode at the College St.

[27]L'Ordre de Paris. 27 October 1946.
[28]Op. cit., pp. 164 et seq.

Raphael of that town. . . . Bishop Garitch died there, whereas Archbishop Saritch emigrated to Madrid, where he took refuge in a monastery."

Why this desperate flight of the princes of the Catholic Church and of their clergy? Were their consciences so guilty that they should abandon their own country in this way? Had they really committed so many terrible crimes?

"For a long while", writes Herve Lauriere,[29] Ante Pavelitch went into hiding—with his gold—in the monastery of Saint Gilgen, near Salzburg, and the monastery of Bad-Ischl, near Linz, in Austria. He wore his cassock with dignity. Later, still disguised as a priest, he went to Italy, where, until 1948, he lived in Rome under the name of Pater Gomez and Pater Benarez, in a monastery which enjoyed the privilege of exterritoriality. Thanks to the Roman clergy, in November 1948 he was able to embark on an Italian boat for Buenos-Aires. He arrived in Argentina with a passport that had been issued by the International Red Cross in Rome on 5 July 1948 in the name of Pal (Pablo) Aranyos. Other Ustashis, less fortunate than he, ended up in concentration camps which the Allies had had to organize in central Europe. ... It was not long before these camps were being visited by pious travellers from Rome. . . . This band went from camp to camp, taking particular interest in the war criminals, in the important people of the former 'Independent State of Croatia', and in their most bloodthirsty executioners. It enabled two abominable individuals to escape from the camp at Fermo. The first, Ljubo Milos—the 'human hyena'—was responsible for the death of over 120,000 people at the camp of Jasenovac. As for the other, the hideous Luburitch, he had been one of the hangmen of Sarajevo and in a single morning had had 56 people hanged on the town's electric pilons .... Soon, the Ustashi mob was leaving the camps en masse, often clothed, like Pavelitch, in a cassock. Their rescuers led them to where they were being awaited.

"In Austria, these Ustashis found a sure refuge in the monastery of the Franciscan Fathers of Klagenfurt, in that of Santa-Catholica, and so on. . . . In Italy, they were offered hospitality at Rimini, Cento Cele, Comte Ferrata, San Paulo di Regola, Grotamare, San-Giovanni-

[29]Op. cit., pp. 164 et seq.

Baptista and at the Franciscan monastery of Modena. In Rome. Luburitch and Draganovitch were received into the Institute of Saint Jeremy . . . which in fact remained the rallying point, in Italy, the centre of all Ustashi activity. . . . The same was true in Paris of a Franciscan monastery where these gentlemen hold conferences enlivened by a Croatian priest. . . . The Ustashi Committees in Austria are helped by Mgr. Rorbach, Archbishop of Klagenfurt."

Pope Pius XII blesses the killers

Were we not right to say at the beginning of this chapter that the Vatican had never before compromised itself to such an extent as it did in Croatia? There, as nowhere else, the Roman Church put aside its mask of gentleness and revealed its true countenance—a countenance of blind ambition and pitiless fanaticism.

Do we have to draw attention once more to the fact that the members of that Church who sat during four years in the Ustashi Parliament could, in pursuance of article 139-4 of the Canon Law. have accepted this mandate only if duly authorized by the Pope to do so? Must it again be recalled that the Holy Father never once reprimanded his good servants? And who could believe that the innumerable priests and monks who were preaching massacre would have persevered in their hysterical zeal had they felt in any way disowned, even tacitly, by their hierarchical superiors and their supreme chief, Pius XII ?

To be sure, he never thought of disowning them, and the heinous Pavelitch, the "adored guide" of Mgr. Saritch, Catholic Archbishop of Sarajevo, could rightfully take advantage of the flattering words, encouragement and blessings which the Holy Father showered upon him. No doubt much would be given today to be able to eradicate their trace. But they remain, well and truly printed in the Croatian papers of the time. The audience granted on 18 May 1941 to the Ustashi general staff was but a prelude to the Pope's ever increasing manifestations of sympathy towards his pious assassins:

"The Ustashi youth of the 'Crusaders', 206 strong and in uniform, was received in audience by the Pope on 6 February 1942, in one of the Vatican's most imposing rooms. The editor wrote that "the most touching moment was when the young Ustashis begged the Pope to bless Pavelitch, the Independent State of Croatia and the Croatian

people. Each member received a medal as a souvenir'."[30]

On 12 March 1942, for the anniversary of his enthronement, Pius XII sent this message to Pavelitch:

"To your Excellence's humble felicitations, We reply with Our thanks and Our wishes for Christian prosperity."[31]

At New Year 1943, the Pope sent a telegram to Pavelitch thanking him for his good wishes:

"For all that you have expressed to Us both in your own name and in that of the Croatian Catholics, We thank you and joyfully send the apostolic benediction to you and to the Croatian people."[32]

In March 1943, on the anniversary of Pope Pius XII's enthronement, there was yet another exchange of congratulations and good wishes.[33]

On 5 June 1943, Pavelitch cabled to the Pope his congratulations as well as "the expression of my personal devotion to Your Holiness and my wishes for the success of Your efforts for the general prosperity of humanity". (Such humanitarian sentiments, coming as they do from the pen of this murderer, are particularly edifying.) The Pope replied very cordially, "praying God for the happiness of the Croatian people".[34] Doubtless the Serbian Orthodox Christians and Serbian Jews massacred by the Ustashis in hundreds of thousands were not included in these good wishes.

In 1944, the following telegram was sent by the Pope to Pavelitch:

"The wishes which you and the Croatian people have expressed to Us, upon the occasion of the fifth anniversary of Our Pontificate, are very dear to Us, and We pray that God may bless you with His most gracious gifts."[35]

The Holy Father had many another opportunity to proclaim the high esteem in which he held the blood-thirsty poglavnik. In 1943, he granted an audience to D. Sinsitch, Member of the Ustashi Government; and E. Lobkowicz, representing the Croatian State at the Vatican, summarized the interview as follows in his report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Zagreb:

"At the close of our conversation the Pope declared that he was

[31]Katolicki Tjednik (the Catholic Weekly) 15 and 22 February 1942.
[31]Hrvatskl Narod, 21 March 1942.
[32]Katolicki List (Catholic Newspaper) No. 3, 1943.
[33]Hrvatski Narod, 17 March 1943.
[34]Katolicki List, No. 23, 1943.
[35]Hrvatski Narod. 21 March 1944.

most happy to have had the opportunity to talk with Pavelitch and that it was a great joy to hear on all sides that he is a 'practising Catholic'. I confirmed this and expressed my hope that Pavelitch would soon come to Italy, as well as my conviction that he would be very happy once again to receive the apostolic blessing. The Pope replied: 'I shall be happy to give him that blessing'."

It should be noted that in 1943, Pavelitch had already been "practising" Catholicism for two years, by systematically carrying out the torture and extermination of the Orthodox clergy and their flock.

But this chief of killers was not alone in receiving the apostolic blessing. Pius XII, in his great goodness, extended it to the most unpretentious executants. The Osservatore Romano[36] tells us that on 22 July 1941 the Pope received a hundred agents of the Croatian State Police, led by the Zagreb Chief of Police, Eugen Kvaternik-Dido. This group of Croatian SS constituted the cream of the hangmen and torturers operating in the concentration camps, and he who presented them to the Holy Father committed such unspeakable horrors that his mother committed suicide in despair.

It may be imagined with what immense zeal these "good people", once armed with the apostolic blessing, endeavoured to "practise" in the fullest sense of the term.

Indeed, as early as August 1941, the Minister of Religion, Mile Budak, who was regarded as Pavelitch's "dauphin", declared, during a public conference at Karlovac: "The Ustashi movement is based on religion. All our activity is based upon our devotion to religion and to the Roman Catholic Church."

In reality, all this goes to prove not only that Pius XII was closely following the development of that activity, but also that he approved it. Indeed, one would have to be singularly naive not to understand the role played at Zagreb by Father Marcone. Legate of the Holy See, Sancti Sedis Legatus (as he described himself in his relationship with the Ustashi Government), he was thus, in terms of the Canon Law, the Pope's alter ego.

In this capacity he took precedence in all official demonstrations. It was Pope Pius XII that was being honoured in his person—and

[36]This audience was also reported by the Fascist agency Stefani.

what a person! The photograph here reproduced is more eloquent than any commentary could be. To see this fat monk, with his bestial snout and looking for all the world as if he had stepped out of a Goya print, occupying a place of honour next to the killer Pavelitch, is like stepping back a few centuries, and the horrors of the Croatian autos-da-fe vividly recall the stakes of the Spanish Inquisition. The Holy-office is not dead, it merely slumbers. From 1939 to 1945 it awakened in Europe—and particularly in Croatia—as virulent as ever.

At the time, these atrocities were often exposed in the press of the free countries. But in face of these protests Pius XII kept silent... and with very good reason! How could he have disowned his own bishops and priests who, duly authorized by himself, were sitting in the Ustashi Parliament, and whose principal, Mgr. Stepinac, Primate of Croatia, was presiding over the committee for the conversion of Orthodox Christians, with, as coadjutors, Mgr. Buritch, Bishop of Senj, and Mgr. Janke Simrak, Apostolic Director of the Bishopric of Krizevci? How could he have disowned Father Marcone, his legate and personal representative at Zagreb, who was supervising the operation ?

* * *

Besides, this operation was in no way unexpected. Had the Ustashi Government, so well backed by the Pope, ever made a secret of its intentions regarding the Orthodox Serbs? On the contrary, it had made them clear immediately it came into power, as has been stated, and it was the Minister of Religion himself, Mile Budak, who, on 22 July 1941 at Gospic declared: "We will kill some of the Serbs, deport others, and the remainder shall be obliged to embrace the Roman Catholic religion."

The programme was thus being carried out to the letter, exactly as conceived and defined. The scenario hardly ever varied: after a few massacres had been judiciously perpetrated in a particular region, there would arrive an evangelizing priest or monk, accompanied by a group of Ustashis, and this apostle, addressing the terrorized peasants, would always use the same sort of language as the monk, Ambrozije Novak, when he spoke to the villagers of

Mostanica: "Serbs, you are all condemned to death, but you can save yourselves from death by becoming converted to Catholicism."

This simple and practical procedure no doubt represented what the Episcopate understood by: "Creating favourable psychological conditions". For even the Croatian and Ustashi Monsignori have a smattering of the Canon Law, which accepts as valid only those conversions which are sincere and are effected without constraint; accordingly, at their plenary conference of 17 November 1941, these worthy prelates had taken care to conform to the "doctrine". The Orthodox Serbs were not being forced to conversion. Goodness, no! They were only being advised ... a knife at their throat.

Heaven could not fail to bless this holy undertaking. This became evident as soon as entire villages, suddenly inspired by the True Faith, abjured—entirely of their own free will, of course—the error in which they had been living for so long. In this way 240,000 Orthodox Christians, all struck by a sudden illumination, were able to cry out, as in Polyeucte:

I see, I know, I believe, I am undeceived!

On the other hand, and in accordance with the programme, 300,000 were deported and more than 500,000 massacred.

However, admirably enough, the same collective grace was miraculously spreading over the members of the Greek faith. These schismatics were also pouring into the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church "without the slightest pressure and through deep-seated conviction with regard to the truths of the Catholic faith", as prescribed by paragraph 8 of the Episcopate resolutions. Thus at Kamensko, in the very diocese of Mgr. Stepinac, 400 people—400 strayed sheep—returned to the fold as one man, under the fond eye of the Prefect, the Chief of Police and the representatives of various Ustashi groups.

When announcing this massive conversion, Radio Vatican, on 12 June 1942, affirmed that it was "spontaneous and without the slightest pressure on the part of the civil or ecclesiastical authorities".

* * *

Yet, after the war, the Holy See was soon to realize that the "spontaneity", the "deep-seated conviction" of the 240,000 converts



Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, Secretary of State of the Vatican, who later became Pope Pius XII



Archbishop Stepinac and the pontifical legate Marcone attending a military parade in Zagreb, surrounded by Italian, German and Ustashi Officers



An archbishop with the murderer of his king

In 1934, Ante Pavelitch played a leading part in the assassination at Marseilles of his monarch, King Alexander of Yugoslavia



The pontifical legate Marcone and Pavelitch receive the Nazi salute from a group of young Ustashis

might well be doubted, even by those who remained fully convinced of the miracles of grace. The marvellous is, to be sure, a powerful resource, but everyone knows that it must not be over-exerted. Moreover, in liberated Croatia, overwhelming testimonies were pouring in from every quarter. Instructions were therefore modified as a consequence, and today there is not a single apologist of Pius XII who does not know the new "line" to be taken. It is now admitted that these mass conversions were not all "sincere and obtained without the slightest pressure", but if the Roman Catholic Church did violence to conscience in this way it was out of pure charity, to deliver these poor souls from the wrath of the Ustashis, and to save them from the famous special knife which the Franciscan Filipovitch and his emulators were wielding with such agility. (We are not told, however, whether or not these good monks, like those who were preaching murder, were also acting out of charity; but surely they must have been, since they in no way incurred the blame of their hierarchical superiors.)

Now, everything is clear—if not theologically, at least in a way most honourable to the Holy Father. He, who, in his humanitarian ardour, went as far as to forget his duty, to trample on the "doctrine" and to violate the most sacred canons, by accepting in the bosom of the Roman Church hundreds of thousands of wretches who had been falsely converted. Out of pure kindness, he took the sacrilege upon himself, thus jeopardizing his eternal salvation.

One is confounded by such abnegation; and if Pius XII is not damned for it—God forbid!—he will have fully deserved the halo of saint. Indeed, some say that this was one of his aspirations.

* * *

Such an example as this teaches us to be neither too hasty nor too reckless in our judgment. Maybe we have been too hard towards Mgr. Tiso. When that holy man despatched his Jewish compatriots to Auschwitz, how are we to know that he, also, was not moved by the spirit of charity?

No doubt the same was true at the other end of the world, in the Philippines, conquered by the Japanese. Andre Ribard[37] reports

[37] 1960 et le secret du Vatican (Librairie Robin, 38 rue de Vaugirard, Paris 1954, pp. 79 et seq.).

that the American and English citizens arrested in the Pacific Islands, and in particular all the Protestant missionaries, were interned there in concentration camps which were in no way inferior to those of Germany. But ". . . the 7,500 Catholic missionaries remained free, they received help and were officially protected by the Japanese military authorities. The Jesuit review America reported this in January 1944. At that time, despite the progress made by the American Navy in regaining the Pacific Islands, there were still 528 Protestant missionaries in the internment camps: they had survived the treatment there. The Vatican had made ... an amazing suggestion ... to the puppet government of the Philippines; this is recorded under reference 1591, Tokyo, 6 April 1943, in a report by the Department for Religious Affairs for Occupied Territories, from which I have extracted the following passage: the Vatican expressed the Church's wish to see the Japanese 'pursue their policy and prevent certain religious propagators of error from acceding to a liberty to which they have no right'.

Here again, one clearly feels, it is necessary to read between the lines, and not to be misled by appearances. In short, we must be able to interpret what we read. Behind this cruel step there must surely have been some highly charitable intention towards the "strayed brethren". But we must admit that we have been incapable of detecting it.

* * *

To revert to Croatia, the Roman Church was actively engaged in increasing its flock there, in perfect agreement with the Ustashi Government. It was thus that Mgr. Janko Simrak, one of Mgr. Stepinac's coadjutors in the Committee for the Conversion of Orthodox Christians, was received on 14 July 1941 by Pius XII, named by him Bishop of Krizevci, and then decorated by Pavelitch with the "Grand Cross and Star", which was accompanied by this citation: "For his devoted service among his clergy and flock and for his sincere collaboration with the State authorities in true Ustashi spirit".

The "Catholicization" was proceeding splendidly, and Mgr. Anton Aksamovitch, Bishop of Djakovo, was able to write in a tract addressed to the Orthodox Christians: "There will be but one

Church and but one Head of the Church, who is the Vicar of Christ upon earth. . . ." And he added: "Follow this friendly advice. The Bishop of Djakovo has so far received into the Holy Catholic Church thousands of citizens who have received the certificate of honesty from the State authorities. Follow the example of these brethren and send us, without further delay, your application for conversion to Catholicism. As Catholics you will remain peacefully in your homes and you will be unhindered in your daily occupations".

As may be seen, this good propagandist did not burden himself with idle circumlocutions.

Yet—many were called but they were by no means all chosen. On 30 June 1941, the Government had issued to the Catholic Bishops an instruction (No. 48468/41) defining the conditions under which the town halls or the police, upon receipt of a favourable recommendation from the Ustashi organizations, were to deliver the certificates of honesty required by the Orthodox Christians desirous of conversion. This instruction contained, inter alia, the following:

§3.—In issuing these certificates, care must be taken not to hand them to the rich Orthodox priests, tradesmen, workmen or peasants, or to Orthodox intellectuals in general, unless their personal honesty(!) can be proved, the Government having adopted the principle that certificates be refused to this category of person.

§4.—The peasants shall obtain this declaration without difficulty, save in exceptional cases.

The Bishopric of Zagreb (that of Mgr. Stepinac) in its letter No. 9259/41 dated 16 July 1941 recognized the merits of this discrimination :

"Regarding the conversion of priests, teachers, tradesmen and intellectuals generally, as well as that of well-to-do Orthodox Serbs, it is essential that extreme caution be exercised over their acceptance...."

We are not especially qualified in Canon Law, but we have never heard that it authorizes the acceptance or rejection of conversion according to the candidate's social class.

What can this mean other than that the integrity of the "doctrine" was once more being sacrificed to eminently opportunistic con-

siderations? It is easy to understand that the Ustashi Government was not concerned to see either the intellectual Serbs escape its claws under the cover of conversion to Catholicism, or, in particular, to see the rich tradesmen and peasants thus save their goods from plunder.

However good "practising" Catholics Pavelitch and his hired assassins might have been, they did not for all that forget the money interest.

The Croatian Episcopate, Mgr. Stepinac in the lead, made ample allowance for this . . . financial . . . point of view, and Father Marcone, the Pope's Legate, had nothing against it. Heavenly "grace" was thus not permitted to work miracles among those Serbs who were too well provided with temporal goods, and, for the first time perhaps, the Church observed to the letter the words of the Divine Master: "It is more difficult for a rich man to enter into Heaven than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle".

* * *

Yet the time came for the debacle of the Axis and of this Independent!) State of Croatia which, thanks to the combined efforts of the Ustashis and the Roman Church, had for a while almost achieved its own kind of "Civitas Dei". Thenceforth the Vatican propaganda went all out to try to prove the innocence of Mgr. Stepinac—and, incidentally, of Pius XII—in the eyes of world opinion. But what are subterfuge and gratuitous affirmations compared with so many officially established deeds and words? As it happened, the Archbishop of Zagreb remained to the very end the surest pillar of the puppet state and of its regime.

On 7 July 1944, according to Fiorello Cavalli,[38] he declared:

"The Croatian people is shedding its blood for its State and it will preserve and keep its State. No one must be deterred by the many acts against the Croatian people and its autonomy but, on the contrary, all should join with renewed vigour in defending and strengthening the State."

And it was at this very time, when the satellite state was nearing its end, that the Ustashi Government decorated Mgr. Stepinac with

[38]Il processo dell 'arcivescovo di Zagrabia (La Civilta Cattolica, the Jesuit paper, Rome 1946, p. 77)

the "Grand Cross and Star" which he so proudly wore (Decree Oc. B. III, No. 552, 1944).

The Croatian Episcopate, also, maintained its attitude in its pastoral letter of 24 March 1945.

It is a known fact that Mgr. Stepinac was thinking of accepting power from the hands of Pavelitch, when the advance of the Resistants towards Zagreb completely destroyed this plan. At all events, before fleeing with the routed German troops, Pavelitch entrusted his valiant supporter with the care of the defunct state's archives—films, records of his speeches, and, in particular, cases of gold nuggets, jewels, watches, etc. . . . which were, as has already been seen, later found in the Archbishop's palace. The Church had refused her protection to the legitimate owners of this property, but she did not haggle over offering it to the property itself. . . .

* * *

The wondrous deeds of the Archbishop of Zagreb could not fail to bring their reward: the Cardinal's hat.

On 18 December 1952, in his speech to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Yugoslav Federal Assembly, Mr. Edward Kardelj, Minister of Foreign Affairs, accused Stepinac of being a war criminal with a vast number of victims on his conscience: 229 Orthodox churches destroyed, 129 Orthodox ecclesiastics killed and hundreds of thousands of Orthodox Christians massacred. He accused the Vatican of having sought, by naming him cardinal, to provoke religious intolerance in Yugoslavia and to undermine the unity of the Yugoslav people.

This elevation of Ante Pavelitch's best collaborator is indeed sufficiently eloquent. But the Holy Father's satisfecit did not end here. He took no steps to forget the man who had so well "Catholicized" Croatia, and on 5 November 1955 La Croix announced:

"Upon the occasion of his sacerdotal silver wedding, His Holiness Pius XII has sent the following message to His Eminence Cardinal Stepinac, Archbishop of Zagreb, who, as we recalled yesterday, is still detained in enforced residence in his native village of Krasic and unable to exercise his pastoral functions: 'We formulate paternal wishes for you, dear son, you who are at the end of the twenty-fifth

year of your ministry, and who have acquired such worthiness, and whose firm virtues We praise. In the trial you are enduring, We pray the Saviour to grant you His comfort, and We affectionately send you Our apostolic blessing'."

* * *

Such was the Croatian crusade and, with all due deference to the fine Sacristy minds that are so keen to contradict the evidence, the responsibility of the Holy See is clearly written there, in indelible characters, from beginning to end.

It would indeed require exceptional impudence to represent the Vatican as "opposed" to the Ustashi regime, when all the testimonies and documents confirm its perfect understanding with these "Assassins in the name of God", as Herve Lauriere so aptly called them. There were two, and only two, men among the Croatian Catholic clergy who rose up against the horrors committed by these torturers: they were the Bishop of Mostar, Mgr. Alois Misitch, and a priest from Zagreb, Josip Loncar. Of course, there was no sign of approbation from the Vatican to reward their inopportune charity, and it may well be doubted that Mgr. Misitch will ever be made cardinal. On the other hand, not one of the men of religion who preached murder, or who committed it with their own hands, was blamed, punished or banished from the Church.

We could look in vain for the slightest mark of reprobation, or even of reservation, on the part of Pius XII throughout the gory tragedy, from the time of Ante Pavelitch's reception at the Vatican on 18 May 1941 to the praises showered even in recent years upon Mgr. Stepinac, whose "apostolate shines with the purest brightness", according to the Holy Father. The main point, obviously, is to agree upon the meaning of this word "purity", although the happenings in Croatia at that time are sufficient to dispel any ambiguity.[39]

Has the world ever seen a clearer record than that of those four cruel years of evangelization by iron and by fire, four years during which Father Marcone, Legate to the Pope, never ceased to occupy

[39]In the diocese of Gornji Karlovac (under the Archbishopric of Mgr. Stepinac) comprising 420,000 Orthodox Serbs, 280,000 were killed, 50,000 took refuge in the mountains and about 50,000 were able to be sent to Serbia. The remainder—i.e. 40,000, were constrained to become Catholics. (Cf. Jean Hussard: Vu en Yougoslavie, p. 217. Lausanne 1947.)

a place of honour among those responsible, and thereby covered the most monstrous deeds with the authority of his holy mandate?

And, even today, is there anything less ambiguous than the assistance and comforts lavished upon the Ustashi chiefs that are being hidden in monasteries, and within the very walls of the Vatican ?

Is not the silence systematically observed by Pius XII towards the victims of the gigantic killing also significant? Not a word of pity was there, no more than of blame for their murderers, whether ecclesiastics or laymen.

They are surely very moderate, who wish to see in this attitude of the Pope nothing but a guilty inertia or a passive complacency. In fact, all this reeks of premeditated crime. No one can be made to believe that that terror, in which the Croatian Catholic clergy collaborated so passionately, could have come about without the express wish of the Holy See. Is fecit cui prodest, says the old judiciary adage: the crime has been committed by him that benefits thereby. Who was benefiting by the mass extermination of the Orthodox Christians, by their deportation or their forced conversion, if not the Roman Catholic Church, which was thus pursuing its secular dream: the extension of its influence towards the East ? The end warrants the means: it was necessary to kill in order to reign. Nothing was denied to this cause.

Today

The Ustashis who have taken refuge in France are the subject of special solicitude on the part of the Roman Church and of certain politicians. In Paris, the Union of Croatian Workers is affiliated to the "Confederation Generale des Travailleurs Chretiens". They have in addition formed the two associations, "Alois Stepinac" and "Stjepan Radic". A paragraph which appeared in France Catholique of 19 December 1958 leaves no doubt concerning the support given to these separatists by the highest of religious authorities: "To exalt the greatness and heroism of His Eminence Cardinal Stepinac, a big meeting will take place on 21 December 1958, at 4 p.m., in the Crypt of S. Odile, 2, Avenue Stephane Mallarme, Paris (17). His Eminence Cardinal Feltin, Archbishop of Paris, will preside, senator Pezet and the Reverend Father Dragun, National Rector

of the Croatian Mission in France, will take the floor. His Excellency Mgr. Rupp will celebrate mass."

By such clerico-political manifestations, the narrow link between the Roman Catholic Church and Croatian Fascism is once more confirmed: perseverare diabolicum.

The confession

This meeting had for its particular object the distribution among the Croatian colony in Paris of a recent work by Father Dragun, prefaced by Mgr. Rupp, Cardinal Feltin's coadjutor.

Judging by the title, Le Dossier du cardinal Stepinac (Cardinal Stepinac's File) it might at first be thought that the author had attempted to be objective—but this would be a great mistake. The presence in Zagreb of the very important person that was the Pontifical Legate Marcone is passed over in silence, as with all the apologists, in fact—which is quite understandable when one knows that Pavelitch received this personal representative of Pius XII as one of the family (see photograph).

Moreover, in this large tome, one is sure of finding, abundantly commented, the pleadings of Mgr. Stepinac's two lawyers, but there is no sign of either the bill of indictment or the charge. Father Dragun makes one solitary allusion to these primordial documents, with the obvious intention of whitewashing Mgr. Stepinac—but, as it happens, it is only the more compromising for the Holy See: "The Prosecutor himself, in his charge quotes the Secretary of State of the Holy See, Cardinal Maglione, who already in 1942 had advised Archbishop Stepinac 'to establish more cordial and more sincere relations with the Ustashi authorities'." (pp. 32 and 137).

So, when he was at table at the home of Pavelitch, Head of the killer-apostles, the Sancti Sedis legatus was but obeying papal orders.

It is true, His Holiness's "sincere and cordial" feelings for Hitler and Pavelitch and their consorts were already well known to us. But it is of no little importance to have them officially confirmed by the Vatican itself, is it not?

* * *

Shortly after the Liberation, the students of University College, Cardiff, took as the theme of a lecture: "Should not the Pope be

tried as a war criminal?"[40]

This is a question that will again be asked during the rest of this work.

[40] La Croix, 2 April 1946.

CHAPTER II

GENOCIDE

HITLER, the new Constantine, and his Swastika labarum. — Plans for the evangelization of Russia. — Pogroms and massacres in the concentration camps well before the signing of the concordat with Hitler. — The "final solution": systematic extermination of the Jews. — The "Einsatz", commandos of assassins, and the collaboration of the Wehrmacht. — The most terrifying nightmares. — The official figure: 25 million dead in the concentration camps. — An interview with the Holy Father: why was he silent in face of so many atrocities? "We were never informed . . .". — Washing of hands after the manner of Pontius Pilate, or the deaf man who does not wish to hear.

"Roman Catholicism was born in blood, has wallowed in blood, has quenched its thirst in blood, and it is in letters of blood that its true history is written."

BARON DE PONNAT.[1]

"After the Reich Minister of Foreign Affairs had transmitted the Fuhrer's greetings, the interview began by the Pope recalling his seventeen years' service in Germany. He said that these years passed within the orbit of German culture certainly constituted the most pleasant period of his life, and that the Government of the Reich could be assured that his heart was beating, and would always beat, for Germany".[2]

"We have not had the consolation of hearing the successor of the Galilean, Simon Peter, condemn, not through diplomatic allusions, but clearly and plainly, the crucifixion of these countless 'brothers of the Saviour'."

FRANCOIS MAURIAC
of the Academie francaise

WITH the help of numerous quotations we have established how first of all Fascism and Hitlerism, then Francoism—these three movements of a same origin—were able to spring into existence, to grow and finally to impose themselves by means of the complete and constant support of the Roman Church. We have equally established that this same Church, by a skilful preparation of consciences, co-operated most actively in the propagation of totalitarian doctrines in the European countries destined to fall under the dictatorial yoke. Whether ostensible or camouflaged, the basis of the manoeuvre was always the same, and its sole object was to pave the way for the conquerors.

[1] Op. cit., p. 25.
[2] Il March 1940: Extract from the report on the conversation between von Ribbentrop, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Nazi Reich, and Pius XII (The Wilhelmstrasse secret archives, RAM. 10a).

For these victors there would be the temporal domination over an entirely subjugated Europe, and, for the Vatican, the domination over souls, through the institution of "Christian" regimes in the conquered countries. Such was the pact—it could hardly be termed secret—which bound the two dictators to the "Vicar of God", and ever since the very beginning of Fascism and of Hitlerism, every act, every word and every manifestation coming from the Vatican—and even its silence, in certain cases—was influenced by it. Hitler was a second Constantine, bringing the Gospel to the world, in the folds of his Swastika labarum. Was it not for this purpose that he had been raised to power; that the bishops of Germany, and then of Austria and Slovakia, were praising him and having the Te Deum sung for every one of his victories? His was a holy war, the war of the Papacy.

It was especially on the eastern front that the evangelizing hero and his helmeted missionaries were fighting the good fight "ad majorem Dei gloriam". It was there that gigantic holocausts were being offered up to Heaven. It was there, in accordance with the wish of the Jesuit Father Muckermann, already quoted, that men were living a heroic period "by shedding their blood for Christ".

* * *

"Hitler never left the Catholic Church" recalled moreover Dr. Otto Dietrich[3] who lived very close to the Fuhrer.

"He had forbidden that Charlemagne be called 'the butcher of the Saxons', by the press or by anyone else; Charlemagne had forcibly Christianized the Germans by the sword and this name had been given him because of the bloody battles he had led against the Duke of Saxony."

Another author, Walter Hagen,[4] who belonged to the German Secret Service, reveals how, in the conquered territories, the converting priests of the "Russicum" were marching behind the Wehrmacht and the SS:

"Count Halke von Ledochowski, Jesuit General, was disposed to organize, on the common basis of anti-Communism, a certain degree

[3]Hitler demasque (Grasset, Paris 1955, pp. 148 et seq.).
[4]Le Front secret, p. 358.

of collaboration between the 'German Secret Service' and the Jesuit Order. . . . Von Ledochowski considered the forthcoming bellicose settling of accounts between Russia and Germany as inevitable. . . ."

And the Basler Nachrichten (27 March 1942) did not hesitate to write:

"One of the questions arising from German activity in Russia which is of supreme importance to the Vatican, is the question of the evangelization of Russia."

This is confirmed by Father Duclos[5] himself, in a book covered by the Imprimatur:

"During the summer of 1941, Hitler appealed to all Christian forces . . . (he) authorized Catholic missionaries to go to the new eastern territories...."

Nor has it been forgotten that, in France, Cardinal Baudrillart and Mgr. Mayol de Luppe recruited the L.V.F. for the crusade against Russia.

And there was also Hans Kerll, the Third Reich's Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs who, according to Andre Guerber,[6] declared in a beautiful mystical flight:

"Just as Christ assembled his twelve disciples in a single cohort that was faithful even to the point of martyrdom, so are we witnesses of an identical spectacle—Adolf Hitler is, in reality, the Holy Spirit."

* * *

"In 1933", writes Leopold Durand,[7] "in forty-five camps of horror forty thousand Germans were already suffering brutal oppression. The sinister camp of Dachau was regularly devouring its quota of prisoners. Pogroms and assassinations had already been launched from one end of the country to the other."

And the author recalls the type of extermination songs that were already echoing in the streets:

"When the knife sets Jewish blood flowing,

"We are once more refreshed. …"

And La Croix[8] itself admits:

[5]Le Vatican el la seconde guerre mondiale (Imprimatur, 4 October 1955. Editions A. Pedone, Paris 1955, p. 130)

[6]Himmler el ses crimes (Les documents Nuit et Jour, Paris 1946, p. 91).

[7]Fraterniti, 15 June 1945.

[8]La Croix, 9 August 1946.

"Ever since 1933, prisoners of the concentration camps were being massacred."

All this did not trouble His Holiness Pius XII, to judge from his silence. Moreover, this was but a beginning. There was far better to come.

* * *

So far as France was concerned, we have no difficulty in believing that the Status of the Jews which was drawn up by the Vichy Government obtained the Vatican's nihil obstat. In this connexion, Leon Poliakov[9] supplies us with an extract of a note from Leon Berard, Ambassador to the Holy See, to Marshal Petain:

"'... I stated that nothing had ever been said to me at the Vatican that could have been interpreted as a criticism or disapproval on the part of the Holy See of the legislative and regulative acts concerned.. ..' "

And he adds:[10] ". . . The proposal for joint action, formulated by the Protestant Church of France at the time of the raids (Jew-baiting) in the summer of 1942, was rejected by the dignitaries of the Catholic Church..."

Adults were not the only victims of these raids, as Olga Wormser and Henri Michel[11] bear witness in a document from which we have extracted the following passage:

"During the second half of August 1942, four thousand children were brought without their parents to Drancy. They and their parents had been arrested on 16 July. . . .

"The children were aged from two to twelve years.

"They were expulsed from the buses into the middle of the court-yard like small animals. The buses arrived with policemen on their platforms, the barbed-wire fences were guarded by a police detachment. Most of these men made no attempt to conceal their sincere emotion at this sight and their disgust for the job they were being forced to do.. . . Every night, the endless weeping of frantic children could be heard coming from the other side of the camp. . . . They did not stay long at Drancy. Two days after their arrival, half of

[10]Breviaire de la haine (Calmann-Levy, Paris 1951. pp. 345, 350 and 351).
[11]Tragedie de la deportation 1940-1945 (Hachette, Paris 1954, pp. 30 and 31).

the children were deported from the camp. . . . The second half's turn came two days later.

"The day before their deportation, the children were searched, like everyone else. Boys and girls of two and three years old came with their small parcels into the search-hut, where the inspectors of the Police for Jewish Questions carefully went through the luggage and sent them out with their belongings unwrapped. . . . The tiny brooches, ear-rings and small bracelets worn by the little girls were all confiscated by the inspectors of the Police for Jewish Questions. One day, a small girl of ten came out of the hut, her ear bleeding—the searcher had torn off the ear-ring which she, in her terror, had not been able to unfasten quickly enough. And in the second half of August 1942 the crematoria of Auschwitz incinerated, at the same time as their nurses, the four thousand children—who had been wrenched from their mothers."

There were mothers who knew exactly where these convoys were heading and who had the supreme courage to hurl their children out of the window rather than to surrender them to the Germans. This infamy provoked a keen reaction on the part of the population of Paris and some of them did all they could to rescue a few of the victims from the murderers. But neither the heart of Cardinal Suhard, Archbishop of Paris, nor that of the Holy Father was touched by the ghastly holocaust. Pius XII, the Pope who was reigning so gloriously, took great care not to condemn this new "Massacre of the Innocents". And with very good reason. . . .

Indeed, let us for a moment study the Dannecker document. This clearly shows that these arrests were subject to the decision of the Vichy Government. Now, we have already seen that this government took no decision in the matter without the consent of the Roman Curia. Must we stress the obvious conclusion ?[12]

* * *

But it was in eastern Europe that the anti-Jewish crusade was especially rife; it was of unprecedented extent and its atrocity verged

[12]For the reader's information, here are a few quotations defining the Roman Church's established doctrine on this subject: "Sword, sword, leave your sheath—sharpen yourself and shine, ready to kill and to slaughter" (the heretics), Arnould, Abbot of Citeaux, Pontifical Legate. "Not only ran heretics be excommunicated, but they can be justly killed", Saint Thomas of Aquinas, the angelic doctor. "It is right to kill heretics", Pius V. "The Church can condemn heretics to death, for their sole rights are on sufferance", Franz Wernz, Jesuit General, from 1906 to 1915.

on insanity. The relevant documents, in particular those placed before the international tribunal of Nuremberg and mentioned by R. W. Cooper,[13] would fill many a library. We shall now quote a few extracts from these papers.

The final solution

"Very soon after war broke out, the systematic extermination of the Jewish race began. Hoss told us about it (at Nuremberg): 'The final solution of the Jewish problem was the complete extermination of all European Jews. I was ordered to facilitate their extermination at Auschwitz...."

"While the German armies were advancing across Russia and the Baltic states, the 'Einsatzkommandos' were following in their wake. Their atrocious task had been studied and prepared in advance. In the dossier describing the operations of group ' A ', was a map of the Baltic countries showing for each state the number of Jews to be hunted down and killed. Another map gave the results of three months' work.. . .

"This task was not accomplished by Himmler and the SS alone. It was accomplished in collaboration with the commanding officers of the armies and with the full support of Marshal Keitel and General Jodl; furthermore, every member of the government, every commanding officer of the armed forces and every soldier fighting on the eastern front knew about it.

"How could operations of this nature possibly have remained unknown when they were being carried out over vast territories, not for months but for years, with the help of the advancing armies and in the regions administered by them ?"

In Serbia

As early as September 1942, the Berlin press was able to announce to its readers:

"Serbia is the first region in Europe to be cleared of these Jews."
('Boersenzeitung' of Berlin, 9 September 1942).

"Indeed", says Leon Poliakov,[14] "there was no deportation in Serbia: the Jews were exterminated on the spot. . . .

[13] Le proces de Nuremberg. Hisloire d'un crime (Hachette, Paris, pp. 136 et seq.).
[14] Breviaire de la haine, pp. 180 and 330.

Nightmares of the most terrifying kind

"A Wehrmacht officer, giving an account of what he had seen in the 'eastern zone of operations', writes: 'The Jews are "transferred" according to orders. This is what happens: they are instructed to be at a given meeting place the following night, with their best clothes, jewels and finery.

" 'They are then led to a specially prepared place outside the locality in question. On the pretext of certain formalities to be completed, they have to deposit there their clothes, jewels and finery. They are then taken off the beaten track and liquidated. Their anguish is beyond description, and the German kommandos have no alternative—usually they have to be well plied with alcohol before the executions can take place'."

The horrible score

"The indictment of Nuremberg", writes the Attorney General Boissarie[15] "supplies the figures and documentation. . . . Fifteen million annihilated in gas chambers and crematoria, to which must be added another 10 million who were progressively annihilated by slavery until they died. ..."
This is confirmed by La Croix of 7 September 1951: "From the statistics supplied by the United Nations, it will be seen that 32 million men were killed on the battle-field, 25 million died in concentration camps, 29 million were injured or mutilated, and 21,245,000 lost all they had. . . . Thus, in five years of fighting, humanity lost the equivalent of the entire population of France and Italy...."

* * *

But what was the Pope, the Most Holy Father of Christianity, doing during so many years of unimpeded Nazi savagery?

On 15 November 1945, Dr. Nerin F. Gun, contributor to the Gazette de Lausanne[16]—who had experienced the horrors of the German camps—was received by Pius XII. Here are a few passages from the interview:

[15] L'Ordre de Paris. 4 February 1947.
[16] Gazette de Lausanne, 15 November 1945.

"I frankly told the Pope how those of us who had been deported were unable to understand why the Vatican failed in its duty to organize some assistance during our imprisonment and why it did not unequivocally condemn the Nazi criminals responsible for the Nazi atrocities, as well as the German people who were their passive accomplices.

"The Pope replied: ' We knew that, for political reasons, violent persecutions had taken place in Germany, but We were never informed of the inhuman character of the Nazi repression. Never were We allowed to make the slightest intervention or to send the smallest parcel of comforts."

"—How was it, we asked, that your representatives in Germany failed to inform you ?

"—The information they had must have been incomplete and it was difficult for them to communicate it to Us.. . ."

And yet, this is what Avro Manhattan[17] writes on the subject in his latest book, recently published in Germany:

"Since all priests are de facto its agents and since its nuncios possess means of information and of pressure not available to other diplomats, the Vatican is certainly one of the world's most efficient centres of information. Indeed, it is able to receive circumstantial reports, whether of a religious, economic, social or political nature, on the smallest parish or diocese anywhere in the world."

* * *

Thus, this vast army of confessors, penetrating everywhere under orders from three thousand bishops who are obliged to send in a weekly report to Rome on the slightest happening in their diocese—this "Intelligence Service", unparalleled in any state, did not suffice to keep the Pope informed!

If this was so, what was to prevent him from switching on his wireless, like any ordinary Mr. Brown? The BBC would have provided him with all he needed to know of events in Germany, France, Poland and Croatia.

Let it be said, rather, that the question put by Dr. Nerin F. Gun was very naive ... or even indiscreet. It brought forth, in reply,

[17]Der Vatikan und das XX. Jahrhundert (Berlin 1958, pp. 17 and 18).

that puerile safety valve. Did this survivor of the Nazi camps expect his holy interlocutor simply to confess:

"—I could not disown my own offspring, him whom I had raised to power for very precise ends. . . . As for the details of execution (meaning: details of the tortures), I was not going to expose the whiteness of my holy robe to that mire of blood."

This, in all decency, he could not say, or that—like Pontius Pilate—he was washing his hands of so many horrors.

* * *

To be sure, the miserable excuse invoked by Pius XII cannot withstand the most elementary common sense. Moreover, there are many testimonies which formally deny it, the most outspoken of which emanate from his entourage.

Let us first of all hear Francois Charles-Roux,[18] Ambassador of France at the Vatican:

"Pius XII was perfectly aware what cruelties the Germans were committing in Poland. He also knew of the hardships they were imposing on the Czechs in Bohemia and Moravia. . . . The evidence of German cruelties is so abundant that Pius XII no longer feels entitled to doubt it." (22 January 1940).

Camille Cianfarra,[19] the New York Times correspondent accredited to the Vatican, is no less explicit:

"The Vatican was unceasingly and remarkably well informed of the internal situation prevailing in the various parts of Europe. . . . The periodic reports which the priests .. . sent to the bishop of their diocese, always got to Rome somehow or other."

Here, finally, is the most conclusive of these testimonies, that of Radio Vatican's announcer, Father Mistiaen, as reported by Father Duclos:[20]

"One of my German colleagues, Father L...., who was in possession of first-hand information, used to bring me overwhelming documents on the inhuman cruelties perpetrated by the Nazis in Poland."

One wonders what else the Sovereign Pontiff needed in order to feel that he was "informed".

[18]Huit ans au Vatican, pp. 354 and 370.
[19]La guerre el le Vatican, p. 408.
[20]Le Vatican et la seconae guerre mondiale, p. 225.

"There is none so deaf", says the proverb, "as he who does not wish to hear".

CHAPTER III

HIMMLER AND THE JESUITS

A FAMILY entirely devoted to the Roman Catholic Church: the father, Head of the Catholic School of Munich and tutor to the Kronprinz Ruprecht of Bavaria; the uncle, Jesuit, former canon of the Bavarian Court: the brother, a Benedictine. — Was not Himmler a mere puppet? — Halke von Ledochowski, General of the Jesuits, and the Central Services of the Gestapo: Catholic priests in the SS uniform. — A strange death. — The political plans of von Ledochowski and Mgr. Pacelli. — A myth: The Catholic Church persecuted by Hitler. — Goebbels, pupil of the Jesuits: "There are lies as necessary as bread!". — Education and training of the future Nazi chiefs modelled after Jesuits methods. Perinde ac cadaver. — Hitler praises his inspirers. The Russicum, organ of espionage and propaganda. "Now has come the time to nail others on the cross, not to climb up there ourselves.". A call to crusade: Pius XII's Christmas 1942 message. — Hitler used to say: "I see in Himmler our Ignatius de Loyola".

"Indeed, ours is a strangely delicate century. Does it believe that the ashes of the stake are completely cold? That there is no small spark left to light a solitary torch? The foolish ones—by calling us Jesuits they think they cover us with infamy! But these Jesuits are reserving for them censure, a gag and fire. And one day they will master their masters."

ROOTHAAN,
General of the Jesuits

"The Jesuits have never conceived of European politics as anything but a war of religion."[1]

PIERRE DOMINIQUE.

WHEN considering the extent and almost insane character of the German atrocities, there are several questions which one cannot help asking oneself about their principal organizer.

Who was Kurt Heinrich Himmler, Reichsfiihrer of the SS, of the Gestapo and of the German police forces? And how did this rather dull man of meagre intelligence accede to a State post second in importance only to Hitler's?

He belonged to a family which was entirely devoted to the Church. His father had been the head of a Catholic school at Munich, before he became private tutor to Prince Ruprecht of Bavaria, in that royal court where his uncle, the Jesuit Father Himmler, had been canon; and his brother, a Benedictine monk, was living in the famous monastery of Maria Laach. In fact, it was this brother who acted as liaison agent between Dom Ildefonso Herwegen, Abbot of the monastery, and their Uncle, the former canon.

Knowing this, it is easier to understand that Kurt Heinrich Himmler, an odd person in himself, should have been able to rise to the highest functions. Someone must have been pulling this puppet's strings. Was it not his uncle, the Jesuit father, who had been promoted high-ranking officer of the SS?

[1]La politique des Jesuites (Grasset, Paris 1955, p. 131).

And was not the latter the very eye and arm of Halke von Ledochowski,[2] General of his Order, in the so sadly famous police services: Gestapo (Geheime Staats Polizei—State Secret Police), the Security Service SS, the Central Jewish Emigration Office (execution of the scheme for exterminating the Jews) ?

In fact, a certain special organ was taking shape at the heart of the Central Service of the Security Service SS, with Catholic priests occupying almost all the important posts—and these priests were wearing the black uniform of SS officers.

Who, then, was sending so many million deportees to death? Was it Heinrich Himmler or his uncle, the former Bavarian canon ? It would really seem that here lies the conducting wire linking Borgo Santo Spirito No. 5, office of the Jesuit Fuhrer, and Leipzigerstrasse No. 86, office of the SS Reichsfuhrer.

After the capitulation of the Third Reich, Heinrich Himmler's uncle was arrested and transferred to the prison of Nuremberg. But he never appeared before the international tribunal which tried the war criminals. One morning, he was found dead in his cell. One never knew whether this was a case of suicide or of opportune execution. The conspiracy of silence was such that nothing ever transpired of this strange death.

The political schemes of von Ledochowski and Mgr. Pacelli

"On the morrow of the Great War", writes the Tribune des Nations, "the General of the Jesuits, Ledochowski, conceived a vast plan, still known as the 'Ledochowski Plan'—it is also called the 'Habsburg Plan'—for the creation, with or without a Habsburg Emperor, of a federation of the Catholic nations of central and eastern Europe: Austria, Slovakia, Bohemia, Poland, Hungary, Croatia, and also—this is most important—Bavaria. . . . At that time, Mgr. Pacelli, future Pius XII, was Nuncio at Munich, and later at Berlin, and an intimate friend of Cardinal Faulhaber, Ledochowski's principal collaborator; the Ledochowski Plan was the dream of Pius XII's youth."[3]

[2]Father Halke von Ledochowski had the grade of General in the Austrian Army. In 1915, as General of the Jesuits, he succeeded Father Wernz, who was Prussian. Is it not significant that the period covering both world wars should have seen two German chiefs succeed one another at the head of the Company of Jesus? (AUTHOR'S NOTE)

[3]La Tribune des Nations. 30 June 1950

Upon careful consideration, it will be seen that Hitler was fulfilling this plan by subjecting all the Catholic nations to Germany—countries which, in the Jesuit's mind, were to constitute a central empire.

This youthful dream of Pius XII seems thus to have haunted him all his life and to have inspired his entire politics, both before and after his elevation to the throne of Saint Peter.

He saw in the obscure agitator of Munich, whom he caused to accede to power and whom he upheld against all principles, the "secular arm" who would make this dream come true.

* * *

The testimony of Raymond de Becker,[4] the repentant Rexist who was condemned after the Liberation, has exploded the myth which was spread by Vatican propaganda—i.e., that the Catholic Church was persecuted by the Germans during the years 1933 to 1954. During a journey in the Reich, before the war, he was able to convince himself that this was in no way true:

"The churches were packed with worshippers, and the priests were continuing to receive their pay from the State and were enjoying a liberty to preach which was quite disconcerting."

And still Raymond de Becker forgets to add that, on important religious occasions, banners bearing the Swastika were seen being carried in great pomp into the Catholic churches, and that they were even blessed by the clergy.

The young Rexist visited several Nazi organizations:

"My visit to the Ordenburg of Sonthoffen left a very deep impression on me. This school for leaders was something both of a monastery and of the Academy of antiquity. . . . More than 500 students were living there at that time, as well as 150 professors. . . . Each in turn was to become a Fuhrer. . . . 'Here, we build the Reich several centuries ahead', one of the Ordenburg chiefs told me."

Goebbels, pupil of the Jesuits

"Still another fact", writes Frederic Hoffet,[5] "shows that Catholicism is not so foreign to National Socialism as one would wish it to

[4]Le livre des vivants et des morts, p. 201.
[5]L'Imperialisme protestant (Flammarion, Paris 1948, pp. 172 et seq.)

be. Hitler, Goebbels and Himmler, as well as most of the party's 'old guard', were Catholics....

"This relationship between National Socialism and Catholicism is particularly striking if one studies more closely the party's methods of propaganda and internal organization. Nothing is more instructive in this connexion than the works of Joseph Goebbels. It is known that the latter was brought up in a Jesuit College. . . . Every page, every line of his writings recalls the teaching of his masters. There is the stress placed on obedience, which was to be the principal virtue of National Socialism . . . the disdain of truth. . . . 'Some lies are as necessary as bread!' he proclaimed by virtue of a moral relativism, taken from the writings of Ignatius de Loyola...."

Indeed, it was by assiduously applying this Jesuistic principle that the chief of Nazi propaganda was to acquire throughout the world—including Germany—the reputation of one of the greatest liars of all times.

And Frederic Hoffet[6] continues:

"There was, in particular, the National Socialist system of educating and training its leaders, with which Goebbels had endowed the regime. This system applied the methods of the Jesuits almost servilely. The young recruits were grouped in schools situated well out of town, where they had to spend several years, isolated from the rest of the world. There, in an atmosphere of austerity, they were submitted to a training which was in no way less severe than that of the monasteries of the Company of Jesus. After a noviciate, which ended in numerous and difficult tests, the future leaders had to swear obedience: 'Perinde ac cadaver'.. . ."

Hitler defends his inspirers

Herman Rauschning[7] tells us:

" 'I learnt most of all from the Jesuit Order', Hitler told me. 'So far, there has been nothing more imposing on earth than the hierarchical organization of the Catholic Church. A good part of that organization I have transported direct to my own party. . . . The Catholic Church must be held up as an example. ... I will tell you a secret. I am founding an Order'."

[6] Op. cit., p. 177.
[7] Hitler m'a dit (Editions Cooperation, Paris 1939, pp. 266 and 267, 273 et seq).

After the war this secret imparted by the Fuhrer was enlarged upon by the revelations of Walter Schellenberg[8] who had been Chief of the German counter-espionage and Leader of the National Socialist Government of Danzig:

"The SS had been organized by Himmler according to the principles of the Jesuit Order. The rules of service and spiritual exercises prescribed by Ignatius de Loyola constituted a model which Himmler strove carefully to copy. Absolute obedience was the supreme rule; every order had to be executed without comment."

* * *

This parallelism between the two "doctrines" was to be further reinforced by the close linkage of Jesuit "evangelization" and the Nazi invasion. This is acknowledged—somewhat discreetly—by Walter Hagen,[9] who saw what happened:

"The General of the Jesuits, Count Halke von Ledochowski, was ready to organize, on a common ground of anti-Communism, a certain degree of collaboration between the German 'Secret Service' and the Jesuit Order. . . . Ledochowski considered the forthcoming bellicose settling of accounts between Russia and Germany as inevitable; for this reason, he did all he could to obtain German assurance that the priests of the 'Collegium Russicum' would not be impeded in their activity in territories that might be occupied by the Wehrmacht. For years, the 'Collegium Russicum' has been preparing priests, with the special object of organizing Catholic missions among the Russian Orthodox population of the Soviet Union."

This testimony is in fact confirmed in a work which is quite free of suspicion, as it is devoted to the glorification of Pius XII:[10]

"The Vatican signed an agreement with Berlin whereby Catholic missionaries were authorized to visit occupied Russian territories and whereby the Baltic territories were brought within the competence of the Nunciature of Berlin."

The "Russicum"

But what, exactly, is this "Russicum", destined to bring back

[8]Le chef du contre-espionnage nazi parle (Julliard, Paris 1957, pp. 23 and 24).
[9]Le Front secret, pp. 358 and 359.
[10]Messages de guerre au monde, by Pius XII (Spes, Paris 1945. p. 34).

Orthodox Christians to the lap of the Roman Catholic Church? Roger Garaudy[11] will tell us:

"The Jesuits consider the Slav countries as one of their preserves. . . . Even today, the true leaders of Vatican policy in the Slav countries reside at Borgo di Santo Spirito, in Rome, at the very military-looking centre of the Jesuit general headquarters. There reigns the 'Black Pope', Father Jansens, General of the Jesuits; his assistant for Slav countries is a Croatian, Father Preschern, who was very closely associated with the Fascist 'Ustashis' who assassinated Barthou...."

" 'Russicum' is short for 'Russian Pontifical College', which is in Rome, at No. 2 Via Carta Cattaneo. It was founded in 1929. It constituted, in fact, a secret section of the Vatican Secretariat of State. For three years, it has been hiding five Nazi SS officers who were rescued by the Vatican at the Liberation. One of them is the collaborator Hauff, who was in charge of the Gestapo at Modena. These officers keep at the 'Russicum' a card-index and records of the Hitlerist organizations left by the Wehrmacht in the Slav countries....

"The second anti-Soviet centre is the Eastern Pontifical Institute, installed at Piazza Santa Maria Maggiore, in Rome. In principle, it specializes in ideological warfare. Father Wetter teaches there as well as at the 'Russicum'. This institute, which trains 70 priests, mostly Poles and Byelorussians, is run by a German Jesuit: Father Hermann....

"Finally, the Jesuit Noviciate, at the Piazza Gesu in Rome, comprises a group of fifteen novices who go by the strange name of 'Russipetes'. Indeed, there aim is 'petere Russiam', to go to Russia. These 'black parachutists' receive a severe training which prepares them for work either on Russian territory or in the peoples' democracies. . .."

But here are some choice statements made to an Italian newspaper by a man particularly well qualified in this question, Father Alighiero Tondi,[12] a deserter from the Company of Jesus who resigned his professorship at the Gregorian Pontifical University:

"The activities of the 'Collegium Russicum' and of its cognate organizations are manifold. For example, in league with Italian

[11]Les Jesuites sont les meilleurs soldats de l'armee secrete du pope (Ce Soir, 21 April 1948).
[12]Interview granted to the Italian newspaper Il Parse. 2 October 1954

Fascists and the residue of German Nazism, the Jesuits organize and co-ordinate the various anti-Russian groups upon instructions from the Ecclesiastic authority. . . .

"When I was speaking with the Jesuit Andrei Ouroussof, I told him that it was shameful that the Osservatore Romano, the Vatican's official newspaper, and other ecclesiastical publications should maintain that the spies who had been found out were 'martyrs of faith'. Ouroussof burst out laughing.

—" 'What would you write, Father?' he asked me. 'Would you say they were spies, or even worse ? The Vatican's politics of today is in need of martyrs. But, as they are difficult to come by, they have to be invented.'

—" 'But', I observed, 'that is a dishonest game!'

"He shook his head ironically.

—" 'You are simple, Father. In your work, you should know better than anybody that the Church's leaders have always lived by the same rules.'

—" 'And Jesus Christ?' 1 asked.

"He laughed: 'We must not think of Jesus Christ', he said. 'If we did that, we should finish on the cross. Now is the time to put others on the cross—not to climb up there ourselves'."

This opinion would appear to be shared by the Holy Father, when, in order to help the German offensive in Russia, he launched himself upon one of his favourite calls to arms.

Pius XII's "Christmas message of 1942"

"This is not the time for lamentation but action. . . . Fired by the enthusiasm of the Crusades, may the worthiest Christians rally . . . to the cry: 'It is God's will!' ready to serve and to sacrifice themselves, like the crusaders of long ago. We exhort and beg you . . . to comprehend in all its fullness the terrible gravity of present circumstances. You who volunteer to join in this modern Holy Crusade, lift up the banner . . . and declare war upon the darkness of a world which has strayed from God."[13]

This inflamed harangue is the proclamation of a generalissimo capering before his troops—before the "Army of Mary", which

[13]Messages de guerre au monde, by Pius XII, pp. 257 et seq. and L'Armee de Marie en marche, by Dom Beaurin (Librairie du Carmel. Paris 1946. p. 18).

had been recruited by the Baudrillarts, the Mayol-de Luppes, to combat the Russians . . . and, incidentally, their allies. In the regions conquered by these "crusades of modern times" the SS will bring about the reign of the Nazi "Order", and, mingled in their ranks, other soldiers of Christ, under the guidance of the "Black Pope" Halke von Ledochowski, will sow the good seed.

All this holds together, and so the "temporal" and the "spiritual" will help each other along. Now it is easy to understand what the Fuhrer[14] meant by these last words, which put everything in a nutshell:

"In Himmler I see our Ignatius de Loyola!"

[14] Libres propos (Flammarion, Paris 1952, p. 164).

CHAPTER IV

NUREMBERG

THE greatest trial of history. The broad daylight of the hearings and the penumbra of the lobbies. — An unsolved mystery: was Hitler's anti-Semitism forced upon him? — "Glissez mortels, n'appuyez pas . . .". — The Wehrmacht takes part in the mass executions. General Ohlendorf: "We had orders to exterminate the Jewish population, children included". — Soap made from human fat. — Testimony of French deportees. — Prelude to Pius XII's interventions in favour of the war criminals: Mgr. Faulhaber, notorious ex-Nazi, blesses the church of the former SS at Dachau. — Pity on the Nazi executioners! Strange machinations at Nuremberg. — Two of the Holy Father's proteges: Hans Frank, Arthur Greiser, Poland's executioners. — The verdict: scandalous acquittals of Franz von Papen, the "man who knew too much", Schacht and Fritsche. — The reactions of the press: "Nazism absolved". "A great voice raised in favour of von Papen." "Von Papen's acquittal is Pius XII's condemnation". — Echoing the appeal launched by Pius XII, the Catholic Herald writes: "Should we not let bygones be bygones?" — Pius XII's telegram to Oswald Pohl, another notorious executioner sentenced to death. "The Holy Father, in his paternal love, sends Oswald Pohl the apostolic benediction to ensure him Heaven's greatest consolation".—Ernst von Weiszaecker, an advocate of 'solving the Jewish problem' by deportation and massacres, hidden at the Vatican. A document overwhelming for the Holy Father. — The Osservatore Romano protests against the incinerations at Nuremberg, but forgets those of the Nazi camps.

"In Germany, both in the cathedrals and in the most modest of village churches, Christian priests preached a racial crusade, exalted the Teutonic military virtues and, for reasons that could deceive only the most primitive of minds, encouraged mass assassination and pillage."[1] LECOMTE DU NOUY.

"The German nation knows that it is fighting a just war. The German nation has a great task to perform —not least of all for our Eternal God. During this year of war, the Fuhrer and Supreme Chief has more than once implored God's blessing on our good and just cause." MGR. MARKOASKI,
Catholic Almoner General of the Wehrmacht[2]

"Where is the statesman or the sovereign who could remain unafraid while beholding at the very pinnacle of the Catholic Church, a man who, free of all control, was the ruler of consciences and was able, unimpeded, to surrender himself to the abuses, errors and excesses of omnipotence ?"

EMILE OLLIVIER,
of the Academie francaise, L'Eglise et l'Etat (p. 409).

The Holy Father's intervention in favour of the war criminals

THE trial of Nuremberg will be remembered as the most gigantic—and the most Dantesque—of all times; that which saw the worst war criminals the world has ever known. Yet the extent of this manifestation of international justice, the vastness of the material means employed, the thousands of testimonies collected and the many tons of documents brought to the debates cannot hide the disturbing inadequacy of the verdicts returned against the principal offenders. The press almost unanimously reflected the general indignation at this, and at the time certain scandalous acquittals and inexplicable indulgences were severely criticized. But what must we say today, when most of the sentences pronounced, already

[1]La dignite humaine (Editions du Vieux Colombier, Paris 1952, p. 29).
[2]Extract from a pastoral letter published by Mgr. Markoaski on 6 October 1940.

inadequate in principle, have yet been considerably reduced by premature liberations? In short, apart from a few figures who were a little too representative—the few "tenors" of the Nazi regime who were hanged there and then—Adolf Hitler's accomplices are faring quite well, and many of them have returned to find enviable positions in Federal Germany. Others have gone abroad and are recommencing careers which are not very different from their earlier activities.

No doubt, this tribunal, though international, was not concerned to lead its investigations into the political field; but, in view of the facts brought before the judges, it is difficult to see how this delimitation could be strictly observed, and it would appear that the members of the tribunal were in constant fear of stepping on dangerous ground.

Because of this, many points have never been clarified, and by no means unimportant points at that. For instance, after so many debates, we might still wonder at the profound reason for the Fuhrer's frenzied anti-Semitism. How can we reconcile his fierce will to exterminate the Jewish race with what he said in confidence to Hermann Rauschning, President of the Senate of Dantzig?

"My Jews", said Hitler to Hermann Rauschning,[3] "are the best hostages I have. ... If the Jew did not exist, he would have to be invented...."

This was no presage of genocide; and yet. . . . What were the pressure, the deals and the bargaining that radically transformed the dictator's attitude? How is it possible in this connexion not to be reminded of certain disturbing silhouettes: of Franz von Papen, that Privy Chamberlain to His Holiness, who raised Hitler to power; and of the General of the Jesuits, the "Black Pope" Halke von Ledochowski?

This example is enough to show just how perilous it must have appeared to certain people to delve too deeply at Nuremberg.

Glissez mortels, n'appuyez pas....

But if the famous tribunal was too discreet, the Holy See's interventions on behalf of the worst criminals were, on the other hand, astonishingly revealing, as will be seen later.

[3]Hitler m'a dit (Cooperation, Paris 1939, p 263).

General Ohlendorf reveals the Wehrmacht's complicity in the mass executions

"The German General Otto Ohlendorf, former Chief of Police, who had been serving in the Waffen SS since his adolescence, was called upon to testify to Kaltenbrunner's omnipotence in the Nazi police organization. The American Deputy Public Prosecutor led him round to the subject of mass executions. 'Before the attack on the Soviet Union', he declared, 'special SS commandos were assigned to the German regular army with the mission to kill all Jews. . . . The Wehrmacht High Command', stated the witness, 'was fully aware of these orders.'

"The Einsatzgruppe to which General Ohlendorf belonged and which was attached to the second German army of the Ukraine, alone liquidated 90,000 persons during the first year of the war. Ohlendorf admits having personally ordered mass executions and having attended these executions. He confesses to have frequently been in touch with army commandants on the implementation of Himmler's orders. The General adds that if his group has massacred 90,000 persons, other units have prize-lists that are infinitely more impressive.

"The local head of the Einsatzgruppe had to assemble all the Jews of a given sector, who were then officered on pretext of a change of residence. Once their names had been taken, they were assembled once more at the execution points, generally near an anti-tank trench or a natural ditch. They were transported in lorries and the killing took place without delay. The corpses were then buried in the trench.

"All the valuable personal effects belonging to the victims, continued General Ohlendorf, were collected and put at the disposal of the Reich Ministry of Finance or of the RSHA (Central Office of the General Staff of the Gestapo and of the State Security Force) whose seat was in Berlin.

"Until the spring of 1942, all executions were effected in the same way. Afterwards, Himmler instructed that women and children should be executed only in gas vans. Once the engine was started, the gas would penetrate the interior of the van and, after fifteen minutes, the occupants were dead. The vans were driven direct to the burial ground, the time required for the journey being sufficiently

long for all the passengers to be dead on arrival.

"The judge asked the witness why Jewish children were massacred, General Ohlendorf replied: . . ..'We had instructions to exterminate the Jewish population in its entirety, children included" ."[4]

Soap made from human fat

" 'At Dantzig', writes Mr. Georges Soria,[5] 'in the buildings of the "Health Institute", I saw a laboratory where, right to the last, Germans were making soap from human flesh. On the ground floor of the Institute, the German chemists, directed by Professor Spanner and Dr. Vohlman who had taken refuge in western Germany, were receiving daily, for experimental purposes, four or five kilogrammes of soap made of fats extracted from human bodies.

"When the Red Army, by liberating Dantzig, put an end to these macabre experiments, the Nazis tried on three occasions to set fire to the building in order to wipe out all traces of their ghastly experiments. But the building is intact. And all the proofs are there. ...

"I was able to talk to one of the young German women who used to work in this macabre factory. She is a tall girl with cornflower blue eyes, and a slightly inane smile.

—Did your mother know what you were doing? I asked her.

—Yes. At the beginning she was disgusted. But, afterwards, she was convinced that the soap we were making could be used in the household.

"Looking her straight in the eye, I asked her:

—And the soap was really of good quality ?

"Quite unperturbed, as if she were discussing the qualities of any ordinary soap, she merely replied:

—Yes, it lathered."

Through the mouths of the deported, our martyrs have testified

"The cries of our heroes dying beneath the blows", writes Madeleine Jacob,[6] "and the monstrous tortures have been heard at the trial of Nuremberg. Of the deported, the most fortunate have been those who have returned from the Nazi convict prisons, because

[4]Ce Soir. 5 January 1946
[5]Ce Soir, 7 August 1945.
[6]Franc-Tlreur. 2 February 1946.

they have within them the strength to will, that strength which drove them to survive so that they might come and proclaim to the world the truth about this Nazified German nation that crucified humanity.

—'Germany needs your labour, you are therefore going to work', said the SS officer to the convoy of 1,200 men who arrived at Mathausen in the middle of winter after travelling naked from the frontier, like beasts. 'I must tell you' continued the officer, 'that you will never again see your families. The only exit from this camp is the crematorium chimney.

"This story was told by Maurice Lampe, who, having escaped from this place of no return, had brought away the overwhelming accusation of his companions, hundreds and thousands strong.

The heads of two young Jews on the desk of 'Herr Doktor'

"He told the horrific story of the two young Dutch Jews whose teeth had caught the fancy of an SS doctor, who decided to 'experiment' on the poor wretches. On one he performed an ablation of the kidney, and on the other an ablation of the stomach. A benzine injection in the heart put an end to the experiment. Then he coldly had them decapitated. Their heads, treated according to a method used in the Amazon region, were to grace the Doctor's desk until the Liberation.

Marie-Claude Vaillant- Couturier

"Marie-Claude Vaillant-Couturier, Member of Parliament for the Seine, saw dead women piled in front of her block. Rats the size of cats were swarming on the heap. Suddenly there would emerge the head or arm of a live woman who had been thrown among the dead and who was trying vainly to get out—defeated in her struggles she would die, crushed by the weight of rotting flesh.

"Then there were the gas chambers and the crematorium ovens. One evening, there was a gas failure. What heart-rending cries she heard that night—the ghastly screams of little children as the Germans threw them on to the stake of petrol-soaked branches. Those screams will always ring in the ears of every mother.

"Suddenly, the voice of Marie-Claude Vaillant-Couturier faltered. Holding back a sob. she seemed to recite, like a visionary:

—Annette Espeaux had taken some water to a woman from the extermination block and the guard saw her. Annette was immediately dragged off and thrown into the block too. Never shall I forget the sight of Annette Espeaux, when a few days later, she stood, naked, on the lorry which was taking her and others to the gas chamber and crematorium oven. She was calling out to us 'Don't forget my little boy, if ever you get back to France!' while the SS ran round the lorry and dealt blows to these women on their way to death.

"She then described how the women of the Revier were killed by a poisonous white powder; how they absorbed the powder, some hesitating, some in despair, and others struggling, for the poor wretches knew that it was death that was being thrust down their throats.

Fatigue duty: clearing away the dead women

"And then, in between two columns of fatigue duty, which consisted in gathering up the hundreds of corpses that were daily to be found scattered over the camp, came SS Tauber. Furious, he set his dog on one of the prisoners, goading it to tear her to pieces and to jump at her throat, whilst he beat her bleeding body with his heavy truncheon... .

"There were the babies that a German midwife was drowning in pails of water in front of the mothers and, at night, in the Tuberculosis wing, the sobs of a little girl calling for her mother. As Marie-Claude Vaillant-Couturier, disquieting and pathetic, imperturbably continues her story, it is almost impossible not to cry out: 'Stop! Stop This is unbearable!'"

* * *

Yet it is in favour of these monsters who dishonoured man's name that Pius XII, with never a bad word, was to increase his pressing interventions.

But, by way of a prelude to these, it would be as well to recall the edifying ceremony that took place at Dachau, in the former death camp that had now become a place of detention for the SS How touching was the solicitude shown by the Roman Catholic

7Dachauer Amteblatt, 30 January 1946.

Church towards the imprisoned henchmen, and how great its concern for their precious souls, while their victims had expired by hundreds of thousands in that hell, without any chaplain to offer them the succour of religion.

Mgr. Faulhaber, Cardinal-Archbishop of Munich, in his quality of notorious pro-Nazi and also as a personal friend of Pius XII from the days when the latter was Nuncio at Munich, was obviously the man to preside over this ceremony.

"On Sunday, 23 December 1945, His Eminence Cardinal Faulhaber solemnly inaugurated the church erected for and by the former SS at the SS camp of Dachau. His Eminence made his entry into the camp; accompanied by his coadjutors, he went straight to the church. To the sonorous strains of a virile and powerful choir, His Eminence immediately began to bless the outer walls. Then the portals opened, revealing the sanctuary in all its splendour. . . . The procession, led by the Cardinal and the ecclesiastical authorities, advanced as far as the presbytery, whilst the SS filled every seat in the vast nave. Again, His Eminence blessed the church's interior and then delivered a moving sermon to the SS, on the theme of the Holy Cross, faithfulness to the Cross and the Cross's blessing. . . .

"Father Pfanzelt, parish priest of Dachau, proceeded to the altar to celebrate Mass in this new church of the Holy Cross; this was enhanced by the beautiful harmonies of the excellent SS choir, and the inmates' orchestra, conducted by Emile Forst. . . . His Eminence was profoundly impressed by the consecration, and, on Saint Sylvester's day he told his diocese that 'he was deeply impressed by the highly religious bearing of the SS'."

Furthermore, at the Nuremberg tribunal an SS named Maler[8] told of the holy examples he had followed by joining this glorious cohort:

"I became an SS because I considered that if the Archbishop of Freiburg (Mgr. Groeber) and his coadjutor were influential members of the party, I also could join."

Soon after Hitler came to power this prelate[9] declared before the Catholics of Karlsruhe:

"I do not think I am divulging a secret to you, or to the German

[8]Combat. 18 June 1954

people, when I say that I unreservedly support the new Government and the new Reich. We know what its aspiration is. . . . One of the Fuhrer's first manifestations was a Christian manifestation. His hand was raised against all those who attacked the Cross."

Again, this is a far cry from the "persecutions" which a deceitful propaganda alleged the Roman Catholic Church was suffering in the Reich. But the Nazi prelate's harangue was obviously not intended for foreign ears.

Juridical quibbling in aid of the war criminals

Father Duclos[10] writes that Father Lener has concluded a series of articles in the Civilta Cattolica by saying that the Nuremberg sentences are political, not juridical. . . .

"The Osservatore Romano of 11 and 14 February 1945 and the Civilta Cattolica of 17 March have replied to the attack made by the Orthodox Council of Moscow against 'the Vatican, which is trying to unburden Nazi Germany of the responsibility for her crimes'."

Pity the Nazi executioners

"At Nuremberg strange machinations are taking place in favour of certain of the accused", writes Henri Danjou in France-Soir[11]. . . It is almost as if it were intended that they should be freed of the responsibility for their crimes, or commended to the benevolence of the judges. By virtue of the enormity of his crimes, Frank, the famous executioner of Poland, was bound to excite particular compassion at the Vatican.

"Doctor Alfred Seidl, Frank's lawyer, stated that Pope Pius XII had addressed to the Council of Interallied Control an appeal for clemency in favour of Frank. The doctor was informed of this intervention by Cardinal Faulhaber, Archbishop of Munich, who transmitted Pope Pius XII's appeal."[12]

This time, the tribunal did not feel they could comply with the wish of the Holy Father, since Hans Frank, Governor of Poland, had a few million corpses to his credit.

[9] Action, 10 May 1946.
[10] Op. cit., pp. 164 and 165.
[11] France-Soir, 26 January 1946.
[12] United Press, 5 October 1946.

Undismayed, Pius XII tried at least to save one of his emulators:

La Croix, 15 July 1946:

"Arthur Greiser, former Gauleiter and executioner of Poznan, who was recently condemned to death, has just asked the Pope to he kind enough to intervene on his behalf."

Official Polish Press Agency, 20 July 1946:

"Pius XII has sent a message to the Polish Government, asking that Greiser be reprieved. Not a single Pole will find an ounce of pity in his heart for the blood-thirsty executioner of the nation. Official circles qualify Pius XII's intervention as stupefying."

For our part, we find it rather compromising. But, let us see who this Greiser was that the Pope wanted to save. The review Action[13] will tell us:

"Arthur Greiser is one of those primarily responsible for the extermination of 6 million European Jews. From 1930 he was President of the Senate of Dantzig and had already got his hand in with the Jews of that town. . . . He was called to the Fiihrer's headquarters and named Chief of the German Civil Administration for Polish territories annexed to the Reich under the name of 'Wartheland'. . . . Greiser thus became a despot having the power of life and death over 12 million Poles. . . . The mission that Greiser had received from the Fuhrer was to Germanize the Wartheland—to transform the whole of western Poland into a Germanic march...

"Greiser organized the census of 9.5 million Poles living in western Poland. . . . He resolved to prepare the Germanization by systematic extermination of the Poles. Then the terrible tragedy began. The Jews were the first victims. The Jews of the Wartheland were transferred to the camp of Chelmo; upon arrival, every convoy was taken to the 'shower-rooms' and gassed. A few months later, there were no Jews left in the Wartheland. After the Jews, Greiser's henchmen attacked all classes of the Polish nation. . . .

"This is the man that impious hands wanted to shield from death."

What follows will acquaint us with the strange ethics whereby, according to the Holy Father, the author of this great slaughter deserved to save his precious life.

On 20 February 1946, Pope Pius XII said:

[13]Action: "Arthur Greiser, whom the Pope wished to save", 26 July 1946.

"There exist erroneous conceptions which pronounce a man guilty and responsible because he was a member of a community, and no effort is made to ascertain whether he is personally responsible for committing an act or for omitting it."[14]

The argument is very clear indeed: Arthur Greiser, or any other of his emulators in extermination, was a member of the Nazi "community". . . . The "community" is guilty, but its "members" are innocent. (Similarly, Nazism was condemned by the Church but "the person of the Fuhrer" was entitled to the most complete submission.)

It is doubtless by virtue of such beautiful casuistry that one has been able to see the Sovereign Pontiff fly to the rescue of the most sinister murderers.

On 29 September 1946, Combat wrote:

"One wonders whether von Papen will be saved by the efforts of Rome. .. ."

Similarly, France-Libre[15] declared:

"It has been confirmed that the Church has weightily intervened in favour of Franz von Papen, the authentic squireen lord who wore with equal elegance the Hohenzollern Eagle and the Nazi uniform. He was a lifelong specialist in plots, and in Germany, such a man was beyond price. . . . Today, the accused does not want to pay and his friends, it said, are urging Rome to act, and it is pleading for him. His defender says to whoever might be interested that his client has nothing to fear. The persistent rumours on the subject of von Papen's acquittal should no longer surprise us. . . ."

Then came the last hearing.

R. de Saint-Jean indicates how the accused received the verdict

—Ribbentrop appeared, as usual, more arrogant than the rest.

—Keitel remained to attention.

—Kaltenbrunner saluted the Court on arrival and on leaving.

—Frank was the only one to give a sign of assent when he was told that he had been condemned, and he lifted his eyes heavenward.

—Frick wavered slightly, like a man who has just been hit on the head.

[14]Franc-Tireur, 29 April 1946.
[15]France-Libre. 28 September 1946.

—Funck appeared to be slightly deaf and had to be told twice to take off his helmet and leave the room.

—Doenitz, who had appeared the most at ease during the last two days, withdrew with his usual detached expression.

Three of the accused were acquitted: von Papen, Schacht and Fritsche, who listened unflinchingly to the official declaration: "The officer of the tribunal is instructed to liberate you as soon as the present hearing is over".

President Lawrence rose:

—I have a statement to make, he said.

The President declared:

"The Russian delegation states that it is not in agreement with the acquittal of the three accused. Nor does it agree that the following should be recognized as non-criminal: The Cabinet of the Reich, the Supreme Headquarters and the High Command. Finally, the delegation is of the opinion that Hess should have been sentenced to death."

Then the President added:

"This official protest has been filed and will be published as soon as possible..."[16]

The American Attorney General Jackson declared for his part:

"The sentence of the international military tribunal is highly praiseworthy in that it applies the principle that a war of aggression is a crime for which every statesman must be punished individually. It is a sign full of hope for the peace of the world that the great powers should have agreed to create this principle of law and should have expressed it in a sentence. I regret that the tribunal should have felt bound to acquit von Papen and Schacht."[17]

The reactions of the press: Nazism absolved

Albert Bayet[18] writes:

"When these lines appear in print, von Papen and Schacht, acquitted, will be freed. . . . A man came forward and said that he was marching with Hitler in the name of Catholicism. This man was von Papen. Through cowardice, he feigned not to hear the immense

[16]France-Soir, 2 October 1946.
[17]3 October 1946.
[18]Le nazisme absous (Franc-Tireur, 2 October 1946).

clamour that rose from the torture chambers and death camps. Nations have seen him as history will see him: an unprecedented monstrosity.... "The world naively thought it would never see anything worse than Nazism run wild. It now sees worse: Nazism absolved."

The Eagle and the Cross

Andre Stibio[19] notes the following:

"... We find it hard to explain why Schacht and von Papen should have benefited by acquittal pure and simple; why, once freed, they should have been able to reply to journalists the very same evening....

"It is most surprising that the archives of a trial as meticulously conducted as was that of Nuremberg should have borne no trace of the diabolical collaboration which, both before and after the war, wherever crimes against peace were being prepared, used von Papen as its velvet gloved diplomat to flatter the victims. . . . None the less he stands, as white as snow, and one is afraid to guess why von Papen is getting off so easily. These reasons are probably to be sought in the ideas symbolized by his name, in the resonances which it stirs, and in the powerful sympathies which it has aroused.

" 'German conservatism will be Christian or nothing', wrote von Papen.

"Above all, let us not believe this Christian Germanism to be less of a conqueror than Nazism and let us not forget the peroration of von Papen's important speech at Munich: "The people, the Reich and the States', he declared, 'must collaborate; they must reconstruct the new Germany. May the idea of power of the "Sacrum Imperium", the indestructible idea of the German Holy Empire spread throughout the Germanic countries, from the Alps to Memel!' "

The lofty principles of the Papacy

Robert d'Harcourt[20] has rightly discerned the deeper reasons for von Papen's "luck":

"By acquitting Franz von Papen, the Tribunal of Nuremberg has acquitted one of the men most responsible for Nazism. Indeed, immense responsibility weighs upon the shoulders of this enigmatic individual.

[19] La chance de von Papen (L'Ordre de Paris, 3 October 1946).
[20] Franz von Papen l'homme a tout faire . . . (L'Aube, 3 October 1946).

. . . His masters always placed him in important positions, at crucial junctures, wherever something had to be done or undone. . . . It was to him that Hitler owed his power. . . . Let us reread von Papen's promises: 'The Third Reich is the first power in the world, not only to recognize, but to put into practice, the lofty principles of the Papacy'."

A great voice was raised in von Papen's favour

"What we did not know", writes Louis Martin-Chauffier[21], "but that we know today, now that the judges of Nuremberg have told us, is that it is possible to participate in the conception, the arranging, the application and the execution of history's most monstrous undertaking of brigandage, and yet be found innocent or only half guilty by those who claim solemnly to found the laws of international justice.

"Von Papen belonged to another international movement: he had connexions. Thirty years of scheming, of ruse, of mediation, of hypocrisy, of back-handed blows and of snares, had brought him timorous friendships, attentive complicities and all-powerful protection. A great voice, it is said, rose in his favour, a voice which we, in the concentration camps, vainly hoped to hear declare its reprobation, denounce our misery and castigate our executioners. But von Papen was far more entitled than we to this intervention. As for us, those of us who were Catholics found greater refuge and put more love into appealing direct to God, who does not bargain... .

"History will retain the files. The period records the verdict. I can only call it an imposture. But when it has had its effect, it will be called complicity. . . ."

Finally, VOrdre de Paris[22] summed up the unanimous verdict of opinion in this concise phrase:

"It is both painful and shameful to have to say it, but von Paperis acquittal is Pius XII's condemnation."

* * *

Yet, insensible to this concert of reproof, the Pope continued with apostolic zeal to rescue the "innocent" Nazis.

[21]Ce verdict est une imposture (Fraternite, 24 October 1946).
[22]L'Ordre de Paris, 4 October 1946.

After Franz von Papen, "the man who knew too much", how many others successfully resorted to his unending mansuetude? The silence observed by His Holiness during the whole of the war and in face of the most monstrous atrocities, was well and truly at an end! The world could once more hear the great voice of the Vicar of Christ, preaching love and pity ... in favour of the executioners, and the pacification of hearts . . . over millions of corpses. But it would be useless to seek among these soothing homilies a word of special compassion for the victims, a word of blame against the murderers. The Pope put them all into the same bag:[23]

"The Church is our Mother", said Pius XII. "Do not ask a mother to speak for or against the one or other of her sons ... in the distress of the present, beside which the painful vicissitudes of the past appear dim. . . . During the long years of the war and afterwards, human nature, a prey to innumerable and unspeakable sufferings, has shown an unbelievable power of resistance. But this power is limited...."

"Let us forget the past", preached His Holiness; and the pious press abundantly took up this theme.

On 3 January 1947, echoing the appeal launched by Pius XII, the Catholic Herald pleaded that a general amnesty should be granted to all the war criminals, which it called "political prisoners". "Has not the time come", it wrote, "to clean the slate?"

If one thinks of the Church's role before and during these bloody years, one cannot avoid seeing this as a true pro domo appeal for the defence. In fact, it is not a pardon but a tacit approbation that Pius XII sends to the vile Oswald Pohl, imprisoned at Landsberg: "The Holy Father, in his paternal love, sends to Oswald Pohl the apostolic blessing as a guarantee of the highest celestial consolation." "Pohl was condemned to death at the trial of Nuremberg, but so far the 'law' has not carried out the sentence. ... He is responsible for the most atrocious crimes. It was he who ordered the concentration camps to be equipped with gas chambers. . . ."[24]

Was it these noble deeds that brought him the Holy Father's benevolence? No doubt it was, for it could hardly be more clearly stated than in this telegram: "Unjustly condemned by men, thou

[23]Christmas message 1946.
[24]Paralleles, 19 April 1951.

shalt find thy reward in Heaven. This I assure thee."

* * *

On 4 September 1945 the Allies addressed a note to the Vatican requesting that it should hand over to them Baron Ernst von Weiszaecker, war criminal, who had taken refuge there.

Who was this von Weiszaecker? Former Nazi Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and von Ribbentrop's "permanent representative", he invented incidents at the Germano-Polish frontier to justify the German aggression of September 1939, and collaborated in the famous plan for the "solution of the Jewish problem" by deportation and massacre.

He was also a general of the SS and Hitler's Ambassador to the Vatican.

On 14 April 1949, the last trial of the war criminals was drawing to a close at Nuremberg. Twenty-one accused, who had nearly all belonged to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, were found guilty of war crimes and of crimes against humanity. But there was no sentence of death, and Baron von Weiszaecker, for his part, got away with a sentence of seven years' imprisonment. A ridiculously light sanction if one considers the indictment against von Weiszaecker for having signed the deportation warrant of French Jews to Auschwitz, for having participated in the conferences which the Gestapo held in order to prepare the extermination of the Jews, and finally for having assured by every means possible the failure of the Swiss effort to save the Jewish children.

Yes, but during his pleading von Weiszaecker's lawyer had read out a letter from Pius XII in defence of his client.

On 28 October 1943 Ambassador von Weiszaecker sent the following message to von Ribbentrop:

"German Embassy to the Holy See
Rome, 28 October 1943.

"Although he has been urged on all sides to do so, the Pope has not been led into making any demonstrative reproof against the deportation of Roman Jews. Despite the fact that he must expect to see this attitude attacked by our enemies and exploited by the Protestant circles of the Anglo-Saxon countries in their anti-Catholic propaganda, he has also done all he possibly could in this

delicate question not to strain relations with the German Government. . . .

Signed: Ernst von Weiszaecker."[25]

This document is overwhelming evidence against the Holy Father. Is it possible to imagine a more dishonourable justification than that credited him by von Weiszaecker? But we can no longer be surprised, knowing the "delicate questions" on which His Holiness "also" always kept silent.

* * *

If we wanted to go into the details of the anticipatory liberations enjoyed by the most sinister criminals of the Nazi epic, we should need volumes.

There was von Neurath, the former "protector" of Bohemia-Moravia, who was hailed at Enzwelhingen, locality of his family seat, to the sound of bells and showered with flowers and congratulatory messages, including those of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and Theodor Heuss, President of the Federal Republic.

"At the end of the war criminals trial" (we are told by Match of 9 November 1954) "he was condemned to fifteen years' imprisonment for 'having authorized and conducted war crimes and for having participated in them'. But someone was watching for him: his daughter Winifred (widow of Baron von Mackensen, Hitler's former Ambassador in Rome). Tirelessly she knocked on the doors. ... Pius XII granted her an audience and assured her of his support..."

There was the SS Daab, of the "Der Fuhrer" regiment, one of the murderers of Oradour. Condemned to life imprisonment by the Tribunal of Bordeaux on 13 February 1953, he was freed in 1956. And for his return, his parish organized a religious ceremony of thanksgiving.

There was Use Koch, nicknamed the "bitch of Buchenwald", who selected the tattooed skins of dead prisoners for covering lamp-shades.

Finally there was the interminably long procession of monsters

[25]Document found in the Secret Archives of the Wilhelmstrasse (quoted by Leon Poliakov, op. cit.. p. 343).

whom the astounding weakness of the Law has allowed to save their lives and, shortly afterwards, their liberty.

* * *

But we cannot have done with the trials of the war criminals without recalling what La Croix of 20 October 1946 wrote:

"In the name of the Catholic burial rite, the Osservatore Romano protests against the incineration of the bodies of those executed at Nuremberg." "This act", wrote the Vatican's official newspaper, "is not only to be criticized in relation to the five Catholics whose will and faith were violated, but with regard to all those who did not explicitly declare their wish to disregard the Catholic rite of burial."

The Holy Father's indignation in this matter is most edifying. But let us admit that we are surprised by it. If our memory serves us well, the Roman Catholic Church has not always shown this aversion to burning, to judge from the stakes which for centuries she set up for heretics and similar, in Spain and elsewhere. It is true that these she burned alive. Theologically, there must be a distinction....

But, to keep to more recent references, the Nazis, in their day, did a lot of incinerating. ... It was by this means that they were in the habit of despatching their victims to Heaven, whether Catholic or not, as the latter gave up the ghost in those camps where there were no chaplains.

In those days, so far as is known, Pius XII never protested. Doubtless he did "all he possibly could in this delicate question, not to strain relations with the German Government", as von Weiszaecker so aptly put it.

CHAPTER V

THE VATICAN HIDES AND DEFENDS THE FLEEING ASSASSINS

THE fleeing war criminals promoted "political refugees", and helped by the Pontifical Assistance Commission. — Conspirators in cassocks: traitors and criminals hidden in the monasteries; false papers, escape relays and chains. — Martin Bormann, condemned to death, becomes Father Martini, Marcel Deat disguises himself as a Franciscan Brother. — Deat at the "Russicum". He receives a special benediction from Pius XII, who hides him at Castel Gandolfo. — Darnand, protected by the Holy Father, avails himself of the Vatican's exchange services. — Pius XII intervenes on behalf of the Japanese war criminals. — A ghost: Ante Pavelitch, the man of the "20 kilogrammes of human eyes", enjoys a well-earned rest in Argentina.—The Pontifical Assistance does not limit itself to the living: Mussolini's body hidden in the monastery of the Angelicum, at Milan. — The Holy Father knows "how to recognize his own". — A purge of the Roman Catholic Church should start at the head.

"I know the clerical party. I know to what extent it lacks heart and honour. . . . I have replied in the language of a man, not with the shameful phrases of execrable sweetness which set back to back the just and the unjust, the victim and the hangman.'"

GEORGES BERNANOS,
Scandale de la verite, p. 71.

WE have just seen how ardently Pius XII redoubled his most compromising interventions in favour of those who, after so many years of systematic massacre, were at last to pay for their sins. We have seen also that these efforts were not in vain; that to the glory of having raised men of blood to power the Papacy was able to add that of having rescued them from punishment so far as it was in its power to do so.

This "charitable" attitude will have had the principal result of restoring to freedom—and hence to activity—some of the most dangerous criminals the world has ever known. Knowing what we do, it is difficult to see this only as a matter of chance. Moreover, besides the criminals arrested and brought before the tribunal, there were those who were able to disappear in time, the fugitives. It was only logical that the Holy Father should exert his Christian charity in their favour also.

That is precisely what happened:

"In Vatican circles, it is said that the Church feels bound to help all those who appeal to her and that the creation of a 'Pontifical Assistance Commission', destined to help political refugees, pursues precisely this aim.[1]

Thus, by an opportune euphemism, the assassins in flight became "political refugees". If they had deported, massacred—and even incinerated, with all due deference to the Holy Father—a few million of their fellow creatures, it was only, after all, through "political" conviction. It would be mean to confuse them with common criminals, and the Church took great care not to do so. It was thus with a clear conscience that she was able to take in and hide in the depths of her monasteries these many outlaws who asked for shelter.

[1]Franc-Tireur, 18 March 1947.

Yet, this elastic casuistry gave rise to vehement protests from almost every quarter.

Conspirators in cassocks

"Five superiors of various orders were arrested, as well as the President of the Catholic Youth Movement. Searches in the many convents that were sheltering the traitors led to the discovery of a vast network whose threads reached straight back to the Vatican. . . . And then the Church joined in. She also had her plot, her conspirators in cassocks; her clandestine organizations, her machinery for false papers, her relays and her chains for the escape and the placing in safety well beyond our frontiers of those whom the Law was after. Her hand was outstretched to the collaborators and traitors. It was already widely known that the convents were persistently extending the broadest and most attentive right of shelter to all who belonged to the Militia, the LVF, or the Gestapo, provided they knocked on the right door and knew the password. . . . The first link of the chain was in Italy."[2]

After this and all that we know of the sorry role played by the Church's representatives in Poland, Slovakia, Croatia and all the countries fallen under the German yoke, we are surprised to read the following declaration (which is daring, to say the least):[3]

"During a sermon at Notre-Dame de Paris, Father Riquet declared: 'If we are not of the party of those that were shot, we have for 2,000 years belonged to the party of martyrs. . . .' "

Hum! Has not the Reverend Father overlooked the Albigeois, the Vaudois, the "camisards", and the "incinerated" of the Holy Inquisition?

But let us continue. ... To this rash assertion, Georges Altman[4] sharply replied:

". . . Whilst the official Church and most of her high dignitaries were dealing in treachery, lay and religious Christians were saving the honour of their faith. It is doubtless also to the assassins of resistant Christians that the monasteries of the cassock plot have opened their doors; certain monks are today taking in and sending

[2] Franc-Tireur, 18 March 1947.
[3,4] Sauver les bourreaux au nom des victimes. Est-ce la ce qu'admet le R. P. Riquet? (Franc-Tireur, 22 March 1947).

abroad avowed executioners and torturers—this is remarkably more than charity demands. ... It is a happy but normal thing that in the old days monasteries should have sheltered the innocent or those who were fighting to defend men against hell. But it is scandalous that victims should today be confused with executioners. How, indeed, can the blood of the martyrs find justice between the amnesty of crimes which is being advocated by a certain policy and the sheltering of criminals which is admitted by the Church?"

In Yugoslavia, also, protests are raised

On 1 February 1947, Yugoslavia addressed two notes to the Holy See: one asking for the extradition of five Yugoslav collaborating war criminals who had taken refuge in the Vatican, the other protesting against "the facilities granted by the Holy See for the journey to South America to certain Yugoslav subjects claimed by their country as war criminals".

As the Yugoslav note very rightly pointed out, the "charitable" activity of the Vatican was openly violating the international agreements which provided that war criminals should be handed over to the Law, and not that they should be rescued.

But Pius XII took no notice of international agreements, and the Yugoslavs were unwelcome for daring to sermonize him who, according to the dogma, is infallible in this matter. Moreover, he made this clear.

Martin Bormann, condemned to death, becomes Franciscan Father Martini

"According to a Neo-Nazi leader, Eberhard Stern, former member of the Reichstag, Martin Bormann, condemned to death in his absence for war crimes by the Tribunal of Nuremberg, is living in a Roman monastery, as Father Martini, a Franciscan monk from the monastery of Saint Anthony. 'I met Bormann, on 16 January", asserts Stern, 'Bormann did not seek to hide his identity. "As you see", he said to me "I am alive. I do not wish to be disturbed".' "[5]

Marcel Deat was no less fortunate.

[5]Combat, 4 February 1952.

Brother Marcel

"It is officially recognized today", writes Olivier Merlin,[6] "that Marcel Deat died on 4 January 1955 of a lesion of the lung, at the 'Villa dei Colli' clinic, above Turin, not far from that hill where he loved to walk. . . .

" 'On 3 May 1945', explained Madame Deat, unasked, 'we left Feldkirch aboard a black motor car driven by our chauffeur, Briand, taking with us our papers, a few typewriters, weapons, and a small case containing silver ware, dollars and some pounds sterling. . ..

" 'At Bolzano, we went straight to the office of the Pontifical Commission . . . which directed us by train towards Milan. From there, the same commission advised us to go to Genoa. . . .'

"A few months later, Marcel Deat and his wife settled quietly at Turin. Deat found shelter in the Franciscan monastery. Helene, his wife, was staying in the convent of the sisters of Divine Providence, a few hundred yards away. . . ."

* * *

"In Rome, he was seen in a car, in the company of two prelates. It appeared, according to the police, that Deat was staying with his wife at the Palazzo which was reserved for important visitors. His file, registered at the Rome police headquarters as outgoing on 18 December 1947, would not appear to have been returned when the French police asked to see it.

"On 17 March 1948, it was learned at the Surete that Deat was living at a property situated near Monterondo, 25 km from Rome. The former minister was in the habit of paying a weekly visit to the Vatican. On 18 April 1948 he was said to be at Castel-Gandolfo.

"It is even claimed that Deat found refuge at the papal residence thanks to the support of Cardinal Canali. . . ."[7]

Marcel Deat at the " Russicum"

". . . It is thanks to the Vatican's protection", writes Jean Bedel,[8] "that Marcel Deat was not arrested. He could have been, from

[6]Match, 9 April 1955.
[7]France-Dimanche, 3 April 1955.
[8]Liberation: "Deat was one of the leaders of the 'Black International', He was about to be arrested in 1947 when the search was abandoned at the request of the Vatican", 4 April 1955.

one day to another, had the French Government insisted. Not only was Deat not tracked down but, ever since 1945, he had been pursuing an intense political activity. . . .

"In April 1947, reliable information reached the Surete to the effect that Deat was in Italy, where he was taking part in the 'Black International', formed by the Fascists and Nazis in flight. Several Italian newspapers announced his presence in Rome. It was correct. Deat was then at the 'Russicum' College, hidden by the Pallotin Fathers. . . .

"Deat is dead, but the former Nazis, the Neo-Fascists and the war criminals at large are pursuing their maleficent activity throughout Europe under the high protection of the Vatican. . .."

* * *

We shall not be surprised to discover, among the "personalities" to have enjoyed the Sovereign Pontiff's protection, the name of the all-too-famous Darnand who, in the days of Vichy, commanded the cavaliers of the truncheon with that vigour we so well remember.

"Darnand, Ex-chief of the Militia, had taken refuge at the home of Father Bonfiglio, who, in the little town of Eldolo, was leading a devout, comfortable and mysterious life. It needed nothing more to awaken the particular interest of the British authorities, for reasons which concern only the Intelligence Service.. . . The English military police, having no use for Darnand, handed him over with little ceremony to the French. Darnand then had to account for his luggage, archives and money. He said that it had all been hidden in many different places. In fact, much of it was found. Only one sum of 21 million francs was missing, and Darnand explained: It was a sum in the earlier type of French note. Father Bonfiglio, a very knowledgeable man, offered to deposit the sum with the Vatican, which would take care of the exchange operation. This is what took place, according to Darnand.. . ."[9]

What has since happened to the twenty-one million that was "changed"? A mystery! Like the author, we might wonder whether this small viaticum taken by the Militia chief for his travel expenses, is not still in the cellars of the Vatican: "We shall not of course go

[9]Franc-Tireur, "Les millions de Darnand dans les caves du Vatican?" 6 July 1945

there to find out. It is not done." But this question brings home to us the strange anomaly, in a Europe that has been bled and systematically plundered by the Nazis, of a Vatican that has become so rich as to figure among the most colossal financial powers of the world.

The Pope's protection extends as far as the Japanese war criminals

"The missionary agency Tides' announced that Pope Pius XII had used his influence with the Government of Washington, in favour of the Japanese leaders who had been condemned to death by the international tribunal at Tokyo. . . ."[10]

As can be seen, the charity of Our Holy Father the Pope is impeded by neither race nor distance.

* * v

Among so many high-ranking people who in times of adversity had recourse to the help of the Holy Father, there could not fail to figure one of the greatest stars, a "practising Catholic" who, moreover, had already been covered in apostolic benedictions—in a word, the famous killer Ante Pavelitch.

In 1957, a press item was indisputably to confirm the presence of the former crusader in Argentina, a very Catholic country.

A ghost

"Where could he be hiding, this man with the monstrous and tremendous ears, who for twelve years was being hunted everywhere?

"The Ustashi, chief of the Ustashis—the most sinister of all butchers of the last war (so say many a tribunal sentence, including that of Nuremberg) was enjoying the shade of the palm trees and the best of health, despite his 68 years. At Buenos-Aires, the most blood-thirsty pasha that the Balkans has ever known, the 'Poglavnik' —the Croatian Fuhrer—with his thick moustache, was said to be peacefully eating 'chachlic' and pistachio ice-creams . and. as was his wont, to be tirelessly dreaming of better days. . . .

"In the garden city with its muddy streets, six shots rang out. Ante Pavelitch received the fifth in the spine. . . . The sixth got him

[10]La Croix, 25 December 1948.

full in the chest. Two blond athletes who, as if by chance, were escorting him, took him to the nearest hospital. . . . The medical diagnosis was simple: two bullets to be extracted. The police diagnosis was less so: Engineer Pablo Aranjos, building contractor, was Ante Pavelitch—who had been declared dead ten times, condemned to death three times, once in France, and categorically declared by the Government of General Peron never to have set foot on the soil of the Argentine Republic and therefore unable to be extradited in accordance with the untiringly reiterated wish of the Yugoslav Embassy.

"But where did his money come from ? There again he had nothing to hide and, before the baffled police, he calmly began to enumerate his alleged benefactors:... The Pontifical Assistance of Rome..."[11]

This question has now been answered. Ante Pavelitch has reappeared in the news for the last time, with the announcement of his death. He died on 28 December 1959 in the German Hospital in Madrid. From Paraguay, where he stayed for some time after his departure from Argentina, he went to Spain—with that facility of movement, of crossing frontiers, for oneself and one's "capital" enjoyed by certain figures who are strongly protected by the Roman Church. (Evidently, murderers' spoils are not subject to exchange control, a privilege shared also by Vatican funds.)

On 31 December 1959, Le Monde wrote: "The short news item published in this morning's press has awakened among the Yugoslavs memories of a past of suffering as well as bitterness against those who, by concealing Pavelitch for almost fifteen years, have prevented justice from taking its course."

The same day, other papers, including Paris-Presse, pointed out that this chief killer so dearly loved by the Roman Church, before being treated at the German Hospital, was living "in a Franciscan monastery in Madrid."

This in no way surprises us: is not the heart of one's family the best place to be in?

It was indeed a brotherly bond which united the killer of Orthodox Christians and Jews to these sons of Gentle St. Francis who had all supported him so well in Croatia, not so very long ago. As for

[11]Match. 25 May 1957.

the "hierarchy"—and, namely, His Holiness John XXIII—the least they could do was to procure this new asylum for the most faithful of their champions. Had he not, as soon as he had come to power, declared through his Minister of Religion: "The Ustashi Movement is based on religion. Our entire activity rests upon our devotion to religion and to the Roman Catholic Church"?

This sort of thing is not forgotten by Rome, especially when the "activity" is soon shown to correspond so well to the words. Moreover, the recent confirmation of the former Nazi Vice-Chancellor Franz von Papen in his appointment as Privy Chamberlain to the Pope, clearly shows that His Holiness John XXIII intends to exercise the virtue of gratitude as fully as his predecessor Pius XII.

* * *

It goes without saying that the few cases mentioned here represent only an infinitesimal part of the "rescues" operated by the Vatican. Alongside the "tenors" whose disappearance excited the public's curiosity, there were the more modest specimens, as well as the obscure, the other ranks, and all the small fry of plunderers and assassins who were promoted to the status of "political refugees". The "Pontifical Assistance Commission" had a heavy task to spread this crowd over the convents and monasteries and then to arm them with forged passports and discreetly evacuate them towards a sure haven. Whether they came from Germany, Poland, Croatia or any other theatre of "operations", all these former crusaders in flight knew that they would not knock in vain at the doors of the pious dwellings . . . just as the blood-thirsty fellagha were to discover in North Africa. If Abel has a bad press in the heart of the Roman Catholic Church, Cain on the contrary has always been the subject of an endless mansuetude there.

What is far better, this edifying charity did not stop at the living, as the three following press cuttings will show us:

Mussolini's body hidden in the monastery of the Angelicum of Milan

"The mortal remains of Mussolini were found, or, more precisely handed over to the police by certain people who knew what had become of the remains of the Duce after they had been removed

from the cemetery of Milan. Yesterday, in the Carthusian monastery of Pavia, a Father of the Order of the Minorites of the Angelicum, named Alberto Parini, handed over to the prefect of the Milan police the mortal remains. The latter had been deposited in a cell. Father Lamberto, Superior of the Carthusian monastery, declared that the macabre object had been entrusted to him that very day by Father Alberto. The prefect of the Milan police declared that Mussolini's body had for a long time been hidden in the monastery of the Angelicum of Milan."[12]

Father Alberto Parini and Father Zucca behind bars

"The receivers of Mussolini's body have been arrested. They are also accused of attempting to reconstitute the Fascist party, and have been detained at the prison of San Vittore."[13]

Mass is celebrated throughout Italy for Mussolini and the Fascist Chiefs

"During these last forty-eight hours, mass has been celebrated throughout Italy, in memory of Mussolini. At Mantova, the police effected a raid at the end of the service celebrated in memory of the 'martyr Fascist chiefs'...."[14]

In the eyes of the Holy Father, they are indeed "martyrs", these men who set in motion the most monstrous of wars, the biggest wave of horror that has ever unfurled across the world. Millions of men, women and children were massacred by their care, but it was all for the "good cause". Are they not entitled, living, to every help; dead, to every honour?

By unstintingly granting them his help and his blessings, the Holy Father has shown that he knew how "to recognize his own". These two Catholics who dare to play tricks on the infallible guide surely are dangerously heterodox: One of them, speaking of those who protected the war criminals, says:

"If they are guilty or harmful politically, they must be fought and judged. The Church has still to be purged. If the affair of the

[12] L'Etoile du Soir, 14 August 1946.
[13] Libe-Soir, 15 August 1946.
[14] Le Figaro, 3 May 1947.

monasteries sets the thing going, it is welcome."[15]

And another concludes:

"We do not believe that religion can be made to flourish on putrescence."[16]

One can but reply "Amen" to such noble utterances. But we must remind their authors that the Roman Catholic Church has its hierarchy, that this hierarchy has a head, and that it is this head—and it alone—that issues the irrevocable decisions and orders. The conclusion is self-imposing: to be purified, the Church must be decapitated.

[15]Action, 4 April 1947.
[16]Les evenements et la foi, in "Jeunesse de l'Eglise", p. 59.

CHAPTER VI

GOD OR MAMMON?

A GIGANTIC financial power. Money, the main instrument of Vatican policy. — The Church's lands are spread all over the globe. — Accumulation and speculation. The Bank of the Holy Spirit. — The Italian economy dominated by the Vatican. From explosives to spaghetti. — Sacred assets in Spain, South America, Switzerland, France, and so on. — Pius XI condemns the modern world's "unrestrained cupidity and insatiable thirst after temporal goods". — The war industries and petrol, profitable holdings for the Roman Catholic Church. — A new Promised Land: a new source of wealth flows into the Pope's coffers. — The Middle East, Algeria and the financial interests of the Holy See. — A post-war enigma: Europe ruined and the Vatican overflowing with riches. — Domination through the press and books. — The pontifical censorship. — The Gospel or Mammon ?

"Whenever I enter the apartment of a dignitary of the Roman Court, I find there people who are busy counting piles of gold."

MGR. ALVARO PELAYO.

"The Papacy has become one of today's greatest political forces of the world."

BERNARD LAVERGNE
(L'annee politique et economique, October 1957).

"My kingdom is not of this world."

JESUS CHRIST.

"In Rome there is no other God but interest."

ABBE DE LAMENNAIS.

IN our previous work[1] we described, on the basis of what certain well informed authors have written, the gigantic financial power which the Vatican represents in the world of today, and with which it is essential to be familiar if one wishes fully to understand the Papacy's outstanding influence in the political field.

We shall therefore summarize what we have already published on this subject, and would refer the reader to the above-mentioned work for any details or references.

While the public may know that the Roman Church has landed property, in general it is far from imagining how much. Is it realized for instance, that in Italy the Church owns 250,000 ha?—that one-third of the land in Spain is hers ?—and that in South America she owns vast expanses? And this does not include innumerable other properties spread over the rest of the globe.

But today, it is less important that the question of landed property should be studied; it is its financial force that counts. Already Peter's pence from 400 million faithful, offerings and masses ensure the Holy See a revenue that may be termed astronomical. This source of wealth which is ceaselessly flowing into the Vatican coffers has given rise to an accumulation of capital. And, as is

[1]Le Vatican centre la France (Fischbacher, Paris 1957).

rightly pointed out by Roger Garaudy, to whom we are indebted for some precious revelations in the question of holy finance: "There is but one step from accumulation to speculation".[2]

This step was, in fact, taken a long time ago, for as early as the seventeenth century the Pontifical States had their own bank, the "Banco di Santo Spirito", But today this establishment, with its unexpected invocation of the Paraclete, is but a modest cog in the gigantic holding constituted by the Vatican's financial organization.

In recent years, such scandals as the currency speculation affair, in which Mgr. Cippico was compromised, have thrown some light on this question and have revealed first of all that the Vatican, through a vast network of banks, is in almost complete control of the Italian economy. Furthermore, the fact that the nephews of Pope Pius XII and of his predecessor were found to be occupying important jobs in the largest of these banks is quite eloquent.

"We have unbounded trust in the charity of the faithful. . . . But divine Providence does not dispense us from the virtue of prudence, or from the human means at our disposal." These words, uttered in honeyed tones by Pius XI, clearly say what they are meant to say. The "virtue of prudence" and "human means" have not failed to bring magnificent results, for the Roman Church now owns two-thirds of the buildings of Rome and invests its capital in all kinds of Italian undertakings: building societies, insurance companies, electricity, chemical industries (including the manufacture of explosives), and so on . . . nor must the production of spaghetti be overlooked; indeed, a nephew of Pius XII, Prince Marc-Antonio Pacelli, presides over the fate of this national industry.

Moreover, this important member of the "black" nobility is far from confining his activities to this food speciality. The real estate business would appear to offer a keen interest to him—or to those he represents. . . . This is confirmed in the following account:[3]

"There was that famous story of real-estate speculations which broke out last year in Rome, implicating a big company which was supposed to have reaped an illicit gain of 150 milliard francs. Prince Marc-Antonio Pacelli, nephew of the Pope himself, is a member of the company's administrative council and the company's

[2]Les mysteres du Vatican (Ce Soir, 10 April 1948)
[3]Liberation, 23 September 1957.

adviser was Signor Bernardino Nogara, the Vatican's financial administrator."

A strange encounter, is it not?

Spain, South America, even Switzerland, thanks to the "camouflaged" Jesuits, are all choice lands for the finances of the Roman Church. Her interests in the Middle East are no secret, and the defence of those owned by her in Viet-Nam weighed heavily in prolonging the disastrous war of Indo-China.

In France, the Vatican favours textiles and the banks and—according to what Roger Garaudy tells us—it does not disdain the impure but substantial income from the casinos. Thus at Deauville, and especially at Monte-Carlo, games are played on sanctified gaming tables and the roulette turns "ad majorem Dei gloriam". A thought that should console the ruined punter.

While on this subject, we should piously read once again the encyclical "Quadragesimo anno" of the sadly missed Pius XI, vituperating the "unrestrained cupidity" and "insatiable thirst after temporal goods", which—he said—was spreading across the world.

"But the war provided a new trend to the sacred monies", writes Roger Garaudy.[4] "The war industries offered a profitable investment. The precious help given by Morgan's Bank, the biggest bank in the world, which had become the Holy See's power of attorney in America, enabled the Vatican to enter the 'Anaconda Copper' Trust, and later, the field of petrol. . . ."

Indeed, North America is the Roman Church's new Promised Land; a land which in the old days was so hostile to her but where Irish and Italian immigration has now ensured—together with the subtle work of the Jesuits—a situation which is becoming increasingly favourable. The dollar now flows into the Pope's coffers, and the position that he took against France in Algeria and the Middle East coincided strangely with his very important interests in foreign petrol.

We shall not revert here to what we wrote in our former work[5] dealing with the almost miraculous way in which the Holy See's funds have so swelled and multiplied in a few years as to constitute the formidable financial trust that may be seen today. We repeat:

[4]Les mysteres du Vatican (Ce Soir, 14 April 1948).
[5]Le Vatican contre la France (Fischoacher, Paris 1957).

in a few years. This is what Geo London and Ch. Pichon wrote in 1933, in their work "Le Vatican et le monde moderne":[6]

"The finances of the Holy See were for a long time mediocre. The fall from temporal power had reduced them to a mere few million lires . . . upon the death of Benedictus XV (in 1922) the Cardinal Camerlingo found a singularly light money box . . . Pius XI dismissed the royal staff of servants, replacing them with his old cook, Signora Linda...."

The first world war had brought about this depression of the Vatican finances, owing to the general impoverishment of Europe and, in particular, the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary, which was the Holy See's principal source of revenue.

The situation has therefore greatly changed since then, and one cannot help noting that, from the "temporal" point of view, the Church's most beneficial years were those of the second world war—at the end of which we have seen, facing a Europe that was blood-stained, ruined and completely plundered by the Nazis, the Vatican overflowing with the most fabulous riches. A strange synchronism! Herein lies a mystery which, though not by nature theological, nevertheless calls for serious meditation.

Finally, the closely knit network of newspapers, periodicals and organs of propaganda which its present opulence has enabled it to spread over the world, is by no means the least important aspect of the colossal power thus acquired by the Church. In France alone, a thousand newspapers and reviews are under its control, and the profusion to be observed of works on apologetics or of Vaticanist inspiration, the many articles and books singing the praises of the Holy Father—who deigns to suffer them to be published, despite the price he has to pay in Christian humility—are as significant as the almost complete disappearance of all contradictory writings. For, with all due deference to the Republicans who govern us, they say, there exists a censorship in France: that of the pontifical censor. Volens nolens, every writer must obtain the nihil obstat, and the exceptions—rare though they be—only prove the rule. There are, on this subject, some very interesting stories, which one could easily assemble into an edifying collection.

[6]Editions des Portiques, pp. 315 et seq.

Shall we select one proof among many ? We shall take it from the extremely well informed daily, Le Journal du Parlement. Georges Oudard, adviser to the Union Franchise, published a remarkable article in this paper, deploring that the government of the day did not react, as it was its duty to do so, against the antinational pursuits of the Catholic Church in France Overseas, and particularly in Algeria. Here is an extract from the article:

"The slackness of which we have been all too guilty in this domain has enabled the Vatican to pursue in Africa and Madagascar a work of disintegration of French unity. Francois Mejan brings this out in a recent work which every man of politics—especially the head of our Government—should read and meditate upon. Under the title 'Le Vatican est-il contre la France d'outre-mer?'[7] the author has assembled many impressive facts, texts and documents which reply in the affirmative. Our Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of France Overseas would derive benefit from the study and use of these.

"I have learned from Rome or, to be more precise, from the Holy See itself, that Mgr. Dell'Acqua, Mgr. TardinVs deputy, is said to have protested most ferociously to our Ambassador against the publication of this work. He was extremely shocked that there should be no French legislation able to forbid its publication or to authorize its confiscation, and he finally asked whether it would not be possible at least to stifle its sale in order that it should reach only a very limited number of readers.

"We are confounded by the presumptuousness of such a step, which the deputy of Mgr. Tardini, who is listened to by the Sovereign Pontiff, would never have had the audacity to undertake if we had accustomed the Holy See to our justified protests against its continual encroachments in France Overseas.

"It is time to put an end to this unpardonable weakness."[8]

What are we to think of this step taken by the Holy See with a view to the gagging of patriots who dare denounce its intrigues against France?

It is easier, of course, to try to stifle a book than to reply to it.

[7]Fischbacher, Paris 1958.
[8]Le Journal du Parlement (No. 604). (We know that, since, several members of the Mission de France—challenged by Georges Oudard in his article—have been found guilty of collusion in France itself with the FLN terrorists—AUTHOR'S NOTE.)

The facts disclosed by Francois Mejan are therefore irrefutable, since the accused are reduced to so cowardly an expedient.

In the olden days, the author would probably have been burned on the Place de Greve. There has been progress since, it will be said. But there would be still more if the Roman Catholic Church were finally and once and for all prevented from meddling with State affairs.

And are we not right to speak of pontifical censorship ?

* * *

This rapid expose on the financial power of the Roman Church throws quite a hard light on the temporal ways and means on which she relies for world domination. It permits of an understanding also of how, after the two most terrible wars that have ever covered the world in blood, she is still not afraid pressing nations into bellicose attitudes. Can it not be said, indeed, that she is quite successful in public calamities ? The collapse even of the dictatorships that she raised up and nourished has not penetrated her strength. So then, why not start the same game again ? What is there to lose? If, in the sight of a few of the flock, the spirit of the Gospels is increasingly lost, at least success is assured on the side of Mammon.

APPENDIX

"All progress achieved within Christendom has been achieved in spite of the Church of Rome and in inverse ratio to its power". MACAULAY.

"The 'scala segreta' the secret staircase, is one of the government's great resources. . . . It is the stage-door entrance of this pompous theatre called the Papacy, a thousand times more fertile in lies, dupery and immorality than any other theatre in the world."

C. S. VOLPI
(Privy Chamberlain to the Pope).

THE DEATH OF PIUS XII

As this book (French edition) was going to press, the death of His Holiness Pius XII, on 9 October 1958, was bringing to a close the most tragic pontificate of all times. And it may be said that the pomp of the funeral was equal to such a fate.

Moreover, this "great pope" who was so keenly aware of the power of modern publicity could not pass away without a powerfully orchestrated concert of hyperbolic praises. The fact that the Vatican controls "a thousand papers and reviews" in France made the event even less likely to be overlooked.[1]

It is well known just how excessive was this "popolatry" during his lifetime. In 1954, when the Holy Father was seriously ill, l'Express published a letter from a Catholic lady who was shocked by the "exhibitionist nature of certain demonstrations", and Father Avril[2] wrote on the subject:

"The authors of these dithyrambs do not realize that the effect produced is exactly contrary to what they intended. The chief complaint against them is that, because they do not always evade the ridiculous, they expose the very person they claim to glorify to the ridicule of ill-intentioned minds. . . . My colleague. Father Deman . . . remarked in this connexion . . .: 'The Pope would do well to spurn this type of homage'. I have often since been reminded of those words."

[1]Jean Meynaud: Les groupes de prcssion en France (Cahiers de la Fondation nationale des Sciences politiques) Ed. Armand Colin, Paris 1958, p. 135.
[2]L'Express, 25 December 1954.

Among the more enlightened, many a Catholic shared this feeling, without being able to overlook that the object of this "popolatry" was also its promoter. How is it possible to explain such an insatiable craving for adulation on the part of a man whose finesse no-one ever contested? Did it not respond to a profound need—a need to drown beneath an uninterrupted flow of praise the most tragic souvenir of his entire pontificate, and even of his entire career? It would seem that this constant burning of incense in his honour was meant not only to dull the memory of his flock, but also—and before all, perhaps—to daze himself.

It is charitable at least to think that this Inquisitor's soul sometimes knew remorse. Thus the following passage of his will should be understood as more than a mere "set phrase":

"I humbly pray for the forgiveness of those whom I might have offended, those whom I might have harmed, whom I have shocked with my words or with my deeds."[3]

However that may be, his descent into the tomb was hailed with the very same dithyrambs and toadyisms that had unfailingly exalted him during his reign. Certain newspapers—of no less than Vatican obedience, of course—in an attempt to sanctify his memory, were even displaying a zeal which was, to say the least, unexpected. This was equally true of certain ethnic groups. . . .

So much for the world's play-acting. But from among the innumerable orisons, there shone one which had the sparkle of a pure gem: "Pius XII, the Pope of Peace!" All honour to the man who made this discovery, which has been widely reproduced, in fact! We can only confess ourselves beaten by this master of antiphrasis.

There is another curious passage in La Croix. It deals with a certain article by don Sturzo, in which "the old pioneer of Italian Christian Democracy" draws a parallel between the funeral of Pius IX and that of Pius XII:

"He recalls the dramatic night when Pius IX's remains were transferred to San Lorenzo Fuori le Mura, to the insults of the populace who tried to throw the Pontiff's body into the Tiber . . . what a difference between 1878 and 1958. . . ."[4]

A great difference, indeed, but does not the editor seem surprised

[3]La Croix, 12-13 October 1958.
[4]La Croix, 18 October 195S.

by this? In spite of ecclesiastical anointment they are not always light-handed at La Croix, and as this flower is thrown on the coffin—undoubtedly with the purest of intentions—we are reminded of the saying, 'save me from my friends!'

To be sure, His Holiness Pius XII received imposing funeral honours. For eight days, the vast public was informed of the whole business. Moreover, was it not necessary, in order to stifle certain discordant notes which arose here and there. . . . For some there were, eloquent though discreet.

Thus, Jean d'Hospital[5] wrote in Le Monde:

"There is an uneasiness weighing upon the memory of Pius XII. Let us first clearly put a question that many people, of every nation and even within the walls of the Vatican City, have for more than ten years been noting in their secret diaries: did he know of certain horrors of the war willed and conducted by Hitler ?

"Is it possible that he, who at all times and in all places had at his disposal the periodic reports of the bishops, who gather information from the priests of their diocese, who in turn hear confessions, was it possible that he was unaware of—precisely that which the big German military chiefs themselves claim not to have known—the tragedy of the concentration camps full of deported civilians, the coldly performed massacres of imprisoned enemy soldiers, the terryifing gas chambers where the Jews were exterminated by administrative ovensful? And, if he knew, why, as guardian and first precentor of the Gospel, did he not come out into the market place, in his white cassock, and with arms outstretched, to shout NO ?. . .

"He did not plainly, strongly and definitely condemn Hitlerism, the religion of blood. It is useless to unearth phrases from the grand array of pontifical interventions. It is no good looking there for what we would hope to find: the red iron. It is not there."

We should also quote, among the "many readers' letters" received by Le Monde, that of Mr. Andre Barnaud, a minister of the Reformed Church:

"In Le Monde of Sunday 12 and Monday 13 October you devoted a short article to the religious persecutions that took place during the pontificate of Pius XII, quoting the list, supplied by the Vatican,

[5] 10 October 1958.

of the countries in which these persecutions were carried out:

"We Protestants feel a profound sympathy for our sorrowing Catholic brothers, and I would have much preferred that during these days of mourning mention had not been made of persecutions.

"But, since the Vatican has drawn up the list, I owe it to Truth to point out that this list, alas! is incomplete. The Vatican has overlooked a certain number of items. Here are a few brief indications, without going into the details, which are in many cases particularly cruel:

"1. Spain's twenty thousand Protestants, constantly victimized, if not persecuted, by the Catholic Church;

"2. The bloody persecution, a few years ago, of Protestants in Columbia, South America, by the Catholic clergy and masses;

"3. The massacre by the Catholic Ustashis of thousands of Serbian Orthodox Christians in Croatia, during the last war.

"To my knowledge no official voice has been raised from the bosom of the Sister Church to regret, condemn and end such horrors. Of the many 'silences' reproached against the late Pope, this to us is particularly burdensome and difficult to understand.

"Shall this voice never be heard? . . ."[6]

So far as we are concerned, we are quite certain that it never will be, and our reasons have been given throughout this book.

* * *

The "uneasiness" that weighs upon the memory of Pius XII—to revert to the very moderate expression of Jean d'Hospital—was to show itself very clearly even before the deceased Pope had reached his last resting place and was buried, with due rites:

In the shroud of crimson
where the dead gods sleep.

This colour, in the circumstances, assumed the character of a tragic reminder.

Undoubtedly, as we have often been reminded, the Roman Church never stops. This time, however, not only did the perpetual motion of the ecclesiastical machinery not slow down, it gathered momentum

[6]Lt Monde. 21 October 1958.

in the most spectacular way. There was widespread pandemonium at the Vatican. It seemed as if the Holy College, after more than nineteen years in harness, wished to lose no time in effacing every trace of a pontificate, which, according to the thurifers, had been so "glorious". Rarely has the broom been so cheerfully handled.

A periodical, l'Express,[7] has very aptly summarized the matter:

"If outward appearances showed the palace of the Vatican to be as calm as usual last week, the inside might be described as having been 'swept by a tidal wave', as a prelate put it. Nineteen years is a long reign for a pope, especially when he is as authoritarian as Pius XII. Once he had gone, profound upheavals were inevitable.

"For centuries the Church had not had such an autocratic pope as Pius XII. He had nearly all the administrative powers of the Vatican in his own hands; he refused to appoint a Secretary of State —the most cherished of all posts—and governed through a small number of relatives and trusted men. These included:

—Mgr. Tardini, the Pope's most influential political adviser, who acted as Secretary of State.

—Prince Carlo Pacelli, the Pope's nephew, first legal adviser to the Congregation of the Vatican (which manages the Holy See's property) and to the pontifical commission in charge of administering the Vatican City. Pacelli's two brothers, Giulio and Marcantonio, were equally powerful figures in Vatican circles. All three are extremely rich.

—Doctor Galeazzi-Lisi, the Pope's personal physician; his brother, Count Pietro Galeazzi, the Vatican architect, and a certain number of foreign doctors placed under the supervision of the Swiss specialist, Paul Niehans, who is the inventor of a rejuvenating treatment based on extracts of animal glands.

—A group of Jesuits including the Pope's personal confessor and chaplain (both German), as well as the Reverend Lombardo, the leading 'mind' of the Vatican radio.

—Finally, Sister Pasqualina, a German nun and the Pope's housekeeper for thirty years. Her personal influence has often been contested, but it is possible that she influenced the Pope's thinking on questions concerning the Virgin Mary. Her interventions in

[7]L'Express, 30 October 1958.

requests for an audience were always successful.

"These few people—less than a dozen in all—had, since the end of the war, constituted the virtual government of the Roman Catholic Church. Although the fourteen cardinals who reside permanently in the Curia and whose power was considerable in the olden days, should have continued to take part in the committees and congregations of the Vatican (Cardinal Canali, for instance, belonged to seven of them), they were deprived by Pius XII of any influence they might have had on the elaboration of the Church's doctrine and foreign policy.

"At a certain moment it even seemed that Pius XII was deliver-ately seeking to prevent the College of Cardinals from playing its traditional role. The reluctance with which he filled the seats that became vacant (there were sixteen left when he died), his refusal to nominate a Secretary of State, his numerous delegations of power to young prelates with no official post used to exasperate the high dignitaries of the Curia. . . . The more senior bishops were often refused private audiences. . . .

"So, no sooner had Doctor Galeazzi-Lisi signed the Pope's death certificate, than the cardinals went into action. . . . Their first move was to invite Sister Pasqualina to pack her cases and to take the train back to her convent in Bavaria. Within three days, the two German Jesuits were following her.

"It looked as if Doctor Galeazzi-Lisi might be more difficult to eliminate, for the Pope had named him head of the Vatican medical services. To the great relief of the cardinals, he condemned himself by committing two errors: 1) he sold an account of the Pope's illness to a group of foreign newspapers (for more than twenty million lire, it is said); 2) his embalmment of the corpse was a failure. Three days later, Dr. Galeazzi-Lisi was dismissed from the six posts that he had occupied and forbidden to stay on the territory of the Vatican State.

"The elimination of the Pacelli brothers will no doubt prove more delicate, but Roman society, who regards them as vulgar parvenus, is awaiting their fall with obvious pleasure. . . ."

Cardinal Canali, the all-powerful "treasurer" of the Vatican, found himself in a fairly unpleasant position, it is said.

These are but a few glimpses of an extremely confused succession,

as seen by qualified observers—and certain passages of the speech which Mgr. Bacci, "Secretary of Letters to the Prince", delivered to the cardinals before they went into conclave, were unanimously understood to contain a "discreet criticism" of the pontificate which had just ended.

Without entering into the Daedalian labyrinth of Vatican factions and intrigues, it is possible, by reading the press of that time, to obtain an idea of just how daring was La Croix's assertion that "the main cause of the Holy See's growing prestige resides in the attitude, as firm as it was nuance, which the Pope had adopted ever since 1939."[8]

In short—even without recalling the famous saying: "Some dead people have to be killed"—it may be said that the majority of the College of Cardinals wished to make it clear that they were breaking away from the deeds of the deceased.

• * *

Nevertheless, the shade of the departed autocrat seemed still to be casting upon the conclave a kind of maleficent aura. First, the American Cardinal Edward Mooney was struck by heart failure, they say, before the doors of the Sixtine had closed upon the voters. Then Cardinal Canali's condition gave rise to much anxiety, whilst six other prelates were more or less overcome by a strange "Roman 'flu". As for Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York—who apparently does not appreciate Italian cooking—he was eating nothing but tinned food.

Finally, the election of the patriarch of Venice, Cardinal Roncalli, to the Supreme Pontificate, at the end of three days, came to liberate the conclavists and to remove them from the danger of mal'aria.

The new Pope took the name of John XXIII. At first, this choice would seem strange, for the Roman Church has already known a John XXIII, in the person of an antipope who, in the fifteenth century, for many years opposed Martin V. Deposed in 1415 by the Council of Constance, he abdicated in 1419, and then received the title of "Dean of the Cardinals". A strange personage, in fact, this former Napolitan privateer, acceding to the tiara thanks to the

[8] La Croix, 11 October 1958.

immense wealth of his "hauls". But one wonders why the new Pope has, by the choice of his name, made a point of evoking this truculent figure. Is it because, in the list of popes established according to the prophecy of Saint Malachi, his place is graced with the motto Pastor et Nauta (pope and mariner)? In this case the new Pontiff will not have usurped the reputation of humour that has been attributed to him.

What kind of pontificate will his be? It would be quite useless to venture to prognosticate on the subject. All that can be said with certainty, is that the Holy See's policy will not be profoundly affected by it, since its objectives will remain unchanged. Also, it would be naive to credit the "discreet criticism" that the Holy College ventured to make on the Pastor Angelicus with more meaning than it contains.

It was politic to bring some measure of appeasement to all the fits of anger and bitterness which the bearer of that edifying title had awakened in the world, and to let it be known that they were imputable solely to the autocrat and not to the entire Roman Curia. He alone was responsible for having made the Church the nurse of the dictators and fomenter of the stupendous drama that transformed Europe into a field of ruins and slaughter. His alone, the diabolical perseverance with which he pursued a senseless dream, when a precarious peace had followed upon the defeat of his champions.

Such is truly the meaning of the manoeuvre: "In all that", the proporati and monsignori seem to say, "they have nothing against us; we had no voice in the chapter".

It was an opportune gesture, with which we have been familiar ever since the days of Pontius Pilate, but which cannot clear the high clergy of the reproach of having servilely executed the orders of their chief. In this respect, it is much more of a confession than an excuse. Certainly a superfluous confession, but one which is well worth recording.

Thus have the prelates themselves denounced the profound vice of a system which, from one day to another, can turn a man who is subject to error into the possessor of an absolute power to which everything—even the most natural revolt of conscience—must give way.

On no account do we wish to venture into the field of dogma. But how is it possible to avoid drawing the logical conclusions which follow from the principle of absolutism? How is it possible not to see the contradiction of the prelate's facile excuse ?

If the Pope really is the Church's infallible navigator, no criticism, even discreet, can be made against him. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, his decisions can only be excellent, even if they do not appear so, and if he means to govern alone, without recourse to the opinion of his "brothers" the cardinals, it is because God has willed it so.

If this is so, it is difficult to understand the speech made by Mgr. Bacci at the opening of the conclave. Speaking in the name of the entire Holy College, he said of the Pope-to-be:

"He will be ready to welcome his collaborators in the government of the Church".

This clearly condemned the quite contrary conduct of the deceased Pontiff—but at the same time, it censured Him who had inspired it, and was a warning that such an error should not be repeated.

While this call to order was undoubtedly given at a most opportune moment, at the Mass of the Holy Spirit, it would appear none the less off-hand for all that. Before Heaven can inspire the members of the conclave, is it in need of being inspired itself? This seems to be the inevitable conclusion one must draw from this type of warning.

However this mystery may be, the cardinals' "discreet criticism" cannot make us forget the docility with which the prelates of the whole of Europe executed their chief's orders, without any compunction of national—or even moral—feeling, when he thought fit to promote the dictators and to assure them of the Roman Church's full support. It would be easy to count on the fingers of a single hand those who in occupied France, for example, dared to resist the will of the Holy Father.

"A thin pope is followed by a fat pope", say the Italians. A combative pope is succeeded by another, more benevolent. This balancing game is skilful, no doubt; yet, we must not be deceived, it is merely disguising the terrible appetite for domination of a power that is after universality in the widest sense of the term.

Under what name or whatever slogan the pontiffs may appear, this unbounded ambition constitutes their common heritage, the "end" that is ever before their eyes. But is it not that of the entire

Roman Curia, from which they emanate? It would therefore be quite useless to expect the College of Cardinals, or indeed any of the princes of the Church, to confine their fatal vocation in any way. In the future, as in the past, she will inexorably move towards the end she has set herself, without the slightest thought for the ruins and the catastrophes that her unwearying pursuit might be causing. "The end justifies the means".

"No political event or circumstance can be evaluated without the knowledge of the Vatican's part in it. And no significant world situation exists in which the Vatican does not play an important explicit or implicit role."[9]

[9]Guy Emery Shipler. Quoted by Avro Manhattan in his book: The Vatican and World Politics, (Horizon Press, New York).

POSTSCRIPT

As will have been seen, I wrote immediately after the coronation of John XXIII: "The policy of the Holy See will not be deeply affected, since its objectives will remain the same."

Two months later, on 22 December 1958, the new Pope was expressly confirming the continuity of the Vatican's policy, in his "Letter to the Bishops of Germany". "So far as We are concerned, We are not departing from the example set us by Our predecessor with regard to the highly estimable German nation. ..."

It has been possible to observe, since, that these were no idle words—and to see just which elements of SS Germany John XXIII regards with particular favour. Indeed, it is not without amazement that I read, in La Croix of 30 October 1959., this somewhat belated news item:

"The former Vice-chancellor of the Reich, Franz von Papen, was nominated Privy Chamberlain to His Holiness John XXIII on 24 July 1959. . . . Mr. von Papen was condemned to eight years" hard labour by the Tribunal for his collaboration with Nazism. . . ,"'

In fact, this was not a nomination but a confirmation, Franz von Papen having already been a "cape and rapier" Privy Chamberlain to His Holiness Pius XI—a detail which the clerical organ prefers not to recall.

Thus the new Sovereign Pontiff has deliberately chosen, to fulfil alongside him these so-called "honorary" functions, the former German spy and saboteur of the first world war. This Catholic Rhinelander who, in collusion with the Nuncio Pacelli, future Pius XII, brought Hitler to power and became Vice-Chancellor. This principal architect of the Anschluss—the man who "knew too much" and who, thanks to the intervention of Pius XII, escaped from the gallows of Nuremberg. This old friend of the wonderful days of Ankara, hotbed of intrigues and espionage during the second world war, where John XXIII, then Apostolic Vicar, and the highly respected German "diplomat" had every opportunity to become thoroughly acquainted—and therefore to appreciate each other.

To stress his faithfulness to the "example set by his predecessor", His Holiness could hardly have found a better way of proclaiming

before the entire world the value which he sets on the 57 millions who died by the Nazi regime.

But did the Holy Father consider this provocative act insufficiently explicit, and feel that it would be better to express his thought more clearly? We may surely conclude so, since this first step was shortly followed by another, by no means less "illuminating": on 14 December 1959, His Holiness John XXIII created eight new cardinals, among whom were—as if by chance—the Jesuit Reverend Father Bea, German Confessor to Pius XII.

As a special favour, this good man obtained the red hat, the Roman Church's next highest distinction after the tiara, without having to scale the intermediary grades of the canonry or the episcopate.

* * *

The lesson was clear but the course of events was to provide the Holy See with the opportunity of proclaiming even more loudly to the world the immutable continuity of the Vatican's policy.

The announcement of a "summit" conference between East and West, fixed for 16 May 1960, could not but excite the wrath of the ecclesiastical strategists. If the two opposed blocs should finally succeed in settling their differences, if a real peace were to succeed the armed peace, the "cold war" which had been so well maintained, what would become of the Vatican? It would mean the end of its political power, of its prestige, of the "moral" influence upon which it trades so well. Who would then trouble to avoid its enmity or to avail itself of its support ?

Finally, if such an agreement were to materialize, would it not condemn the immense losses suffered by the Roman Church in central Europe, those Polish, Hungarian and Czechoslovak serfs, whom she lost by her own fault in madly supporting the Nazi-Fascist adventure? Did not "The Silent Church", the theme so expertly conducted, run the risk of remaining voiceless for ever ?

Aware of this danger, the Holy See violently manifested its opposition to these peace negotiations, on the very day that Mr. Gronchi, President of the Italian Republic, was to fly to Moscow. Prevented by an opportune attack of influenza, he did not in fact leave—but the impious plan to enter into conversations with the

Soviet "atheists" was none the less publicly stigmatized from the height of the pulpit of Santa Maria Maggiore, on 7 January 1960, during a service dedicated to the famous "Silent Church".

Entrusted with this operation, one of the highest dignitaries of the Curia, Cardinal Ottaviani, Secretary to the Holy Office, fulminated a half-curse upon the "politicians" guilty of "shaking hands" with the enemies of God. The fiery cardinal described these politicans as "stunned by terror". Moreover, all Christians in general found themselves severely reprimanded for not having cast aside in horror the idea of such an impious peace.

Thus the Vatican threw off its mask and openly recommended the continuance of the cold war—pending the hot one.

A fortnight after the explosion of this oratorical bomb, the Holy Father was receiving with particular solicitude Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, his Privy Chamberlain, who had come to Rome in an attempt to draw the Italian Government into the camp opposing the detente. An unofficial communique was spreading urbi et orbi the unambiguous words addressed to the Pontiff by the Chancellor-Chamberlain, claiming for Germany—as Hitler had previously done—the role of "Keeper of the West" which God had supposedly given it.

Thus even the mortal peril of an atomic war is powerless to deter the Vatican from its criminal bellicism.

It is up to you, the peoples, you who have been abused for so long, to say whether or not you are weary of paying for this mad dream with your blood.